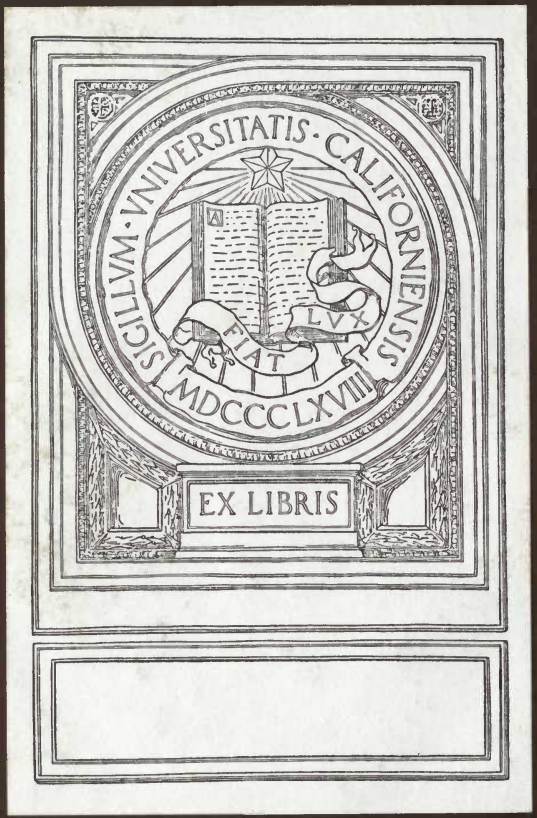
WASHINGTONIANS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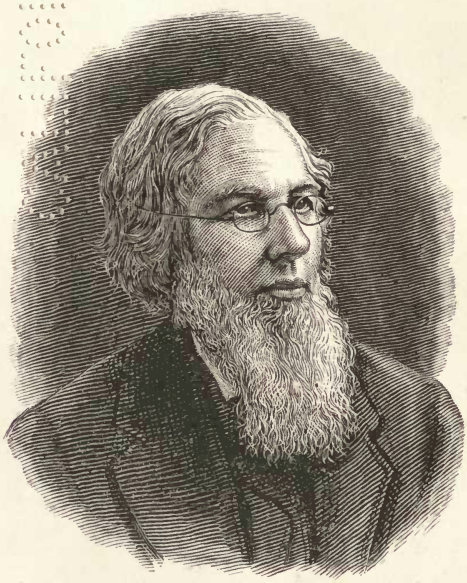

Truly Yours
T. S. Arthur

JAMES LATIMER BRINGS THE BOTTLE OUT FOR THE FIRST TIME; MR. LATIMER FIRST INDUCES HIS WIFE TO "TAKE A DROP!"—*Page* 268.

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T. S. ARTHUR'S GREAT TEMPERANCE STORIES.

SIX NIGHTS

WITH

THE WASHINGTONIANS;

AND OTHER TEMPERANCE TALES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

AUTHOR OF "TEN NIGHTS IN A BAR-ROOM," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION.

Of the few good and deservedly popular writers of the present day, none stand better with the reading community than T. S. Arthur; and no class of books are more highly appreciated, nor should be more widely circulated than his celebrated and admirable Temperance Tales, which are contained in this volume.

This series of Temperance Tales, entitled "Six Nights with the Washingtonians, and other Temperance Tales," were written by him, when the question of "Total Abstinence" was convulsing the whole country, and though among his earlier productions, are not inferior, in any respect, to his subsequent writings; and their circulation, as originally published separately, in pamphlet form, far exceeded that of any publications of a similar character ever issued.

The great demand for a uniform and complete edition of T. S. Arthur's celebrated Temperance Tales, has induced the Publishers to issue a new, complete, uniform, and beautiful edition of them in one volume, in its present form, under the title of "Six Nights with the Washingtonians, and other Temperance Tales," trusting that a copy of them in this new form may find its way into every house and cottage in the land.

PREFACE.

When the Temperance Tales contained in this volume were written, and published separately, the writer did not anticipate so favorable a reception as they have obtained in all directions. He believed that, if he were to enter a field so full of rich materials as the one opened by the great Temperance Reformation, he might present scenes that would not only deeply interest every family in the land, but act as powerful auxiliaries in the promotion of that noble cause. His success has been far beyond his expectations. But this success has resulted entirely from the fact, that, in every one of the stories presented, there has been, as its groundwork, a basis of real incidents; and these have been detailed without any aim at artificial effect, but simply with a view to let truth and nature speak forth in their legitimate power and pathos.

At every step of his progress in these tales, the writer has felt with the actors—sympathising with them in their heart-aching sorrows, and rejoicing with them when the morning has broken after a long night of affliction. This is because they were not mere fictions of his own imagination: and it is because they

are not mere fictions that they have any power to awaken a corresponding interest in the mind of the reader.

The title to this volume, "SIX NIGHTS WITH THE WASHINGTONIANS, AND OTHER TEMPERANCE TALES," was suggested, naturally, from the fact of the writer's having been present at some of the first experience meetings held in Baltimore, only a few months after the formation of the original Washington Temperance Society. The impression then made upon his mind by the simple but eloquent details of its members, as they related their sad experiences in those meetings, can never be effaced from his memory. Many of the very experiences to which the writer alludes in these stories, have since been related by these pioneers, in almost every city in the Union, and the whole country can now attest their power to move the heart and to do good.

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THE WASHINGTONIANS.

By T. S. ARTHUR.

"Come," said a friend, one evening, "Let us look in upon the Washingtonians."

"The Washingtonians!" I replied. "And pray, who and what are they?"

"Have you not heard about them?"

"No."

"Then you are ignorant of one of the most remarkable facts in the history of the times."

"Explain yourself."

"With pleasure. Some time ago, there were assembled in a drinking-house in this city, (Baltimore,) six men, well advanced in years, who had for a long time been confirmed drunkards, or, at least, so wedded to the love of strong drink, as to have found it almost impossible to live without a daily resort to its stimulating influences. They had met accidentally, or rather, without any other design in repairing to the bar-room than that which had taken them there hundreds of times before. But in the mind of each there was a feeling of sorrow for his enslaved and wretched condition. A strong desire to rise out of it—yet a painful, hopeless sense of weakness. How often, alas! how often had each made resolutions of reform. How often had each renounced the cup of confusion, only to seek again the bewilder-

ing draught, and to sink still lower in the scale of human degradation!

"Thus they met as they had often met before; but neither seemed inclined to call for the subtle poison that had so many times stolen away their reason. Soon the feelings of each became known to the others, and they felt a sudden hope springing up in their minds—a hope in the power of association. Sad experience had proven to each one of that little company, that alone he could not stand. But together, shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand, and heart to heart, they felt that though the struggle would be hard, they could, and they would conquer!

"In that moral pest-house then, while inhaling with every breath the tempting fumes of the potations they loved, did this little band pledge themselves to each other, never again to drink any kind of intoxicating drink—spirits, wine, malt or cider."

"They did not keep their pledge, of course," I said, interrupting him. "Who ever heard of a confirmed drunkard becoming a sober man? The hope for such a result has long since faded from the minds of the benevolent, and now all the efforts of temperance reformers are turned to the keeping of sober men from becoming lovers of strong drink. The drunkard will remain a drunkard to the end of his life; there is no hope for him."

"Do not jump to conclusions quite so hastily," my friend replied. "There is hope for the drunkard, let me tell you. But hear me out patiently. These six men, soon after they had thus pledged themselves to each other, determined that they would make an effort to increase their number. They accordingly organized a society, and called it the '*Washington Temperance Society.*' Then they went to some of their old companions, told them what they had done, and invited them to join their society. A few were found to break away from their bondage and unite with them. Thus their power and influence became increased. Others soon followed the example, and it was not long before the society numbered over one hundred members, each one of whom had been for years in the habit of drinking, and most of them occasionally to intoxication.

"All this time, each member was using all his powers of reasoning and persuasion to induce his old companions to come in. Some would, on the nights of their meetings, station themselves near the grog-shops they had formerly been in the habit of visit-

ing, and intercept those whom they knew, before they had reached the doors they were seeking. Then they would reason with them, and persuade them to come to the society; if not to join, at least to hear. In this way numbers were added. Such members as had no work, were aided as far as possible, and efforts were made to procure work for them.

"And thus the reformation has gone on, and now 'The Washington Temperance Society' numbers several hundred members, nearly every one of whom had been in the habit of drinking to the extent of seriously marring his prospects in life. Every week they meet regularly, for the reception of new members, and for mutual encouragement. And these meetings are of a highly interesting nature. Usually, some of the members relate their experiences, and these are frequently affecting in a high degree."

"Surely you must be drawing on your imagination. The thing surpasses belief."

"I have not told you half. But come. Let us go to the meeting; this is the regular night."

There was no hesitation of course. In a few minutes we entered a large room at the corner of Hanover and Lombard streets, which we found crowded to excess, with men of all ages, mostly mechanics and working-men. We pushed our way close up to the speaker's stand, and then turned to survey the countenance of the assembly. It was a sight to move the heart. There were men, old and grey-headed, and youths scarcely eighteen, into whose very vitals had been fixed the tooth of the destroyer. Men who had been slaves, some for a long series of years, to the most degrading vice. But now they stood up as freemen, and there was scarcely a face, marred sadly as some were, that had not an expression of serious, manly determination and confidence.

In a little while after our entrance, the preliminaries of the meeting being over, several of the members successively related their experiences. Sometimes these were humorous and amusing; but more frequently they portrayed scenes that touched the feelings, and often drew tears from the eyes. They were the simple unadorned histories of real life, told by the participants in them, and often with an eloquence of tone and manner that stirred the heart to its very depths.

To give any of these now, is not my design. And so we will pass by this part of the meeting, and linger for a few moments

over the scene that presented itself when the President invited all who wished to join the society to come forward and sign the pledge, which was read. It was in these words:

"We whose names are annexed, desirous of forming a society for our mutual benefit, to guard against a pernicious practice, which is injurious to our health, standing and families, do pledge ourselves as gentlemen, that we will never again drink any spirituous or malt liquors, wine or cider."

A dead silence ensued, which lasted for only a moment or two, when a slight noise was heard in a far corner of the room. Then there was a motion in the dense crowd, and presently a man was seen coming up the aisle. He was scarcely past the prime of life; but he had a look of premature old age. His face was so swollen and disfigured, that the eye turned away from it involuntarily.

"Do you think there is any use in me signing it?" he asked, as he paused at the table on which the books of the society rested, trembling from head to foot, and gazing up, appealingly, into the face of the President. There were few who looked upon the wretched being who did not feel a rising emotion of tenderness and compassion.

"Yes I do," was the prompt and positive reply. "It is the only thing that can save you. And it *will* save you!"

"O sir, do you really think so?"

"I know so! Sign it at once, and you are a free man."

"I will! I will!" the poor creature said in an earnest tone, taking the pen that the Secretary held out to him, and putting, with an eager, trembling hand, his name to the pledge.

"Abide by that and you are safe," said the President, smiling.

"I will try," responded the man, and his tones were steadier, and had something of confidence in them; and he seemed really like a changed being, full of hope and resolution, as he turned from the table and mingled in the crowd.

Then came another and another, until forty-nine had signed the pledge.

"Come along! We have room for another one. We must have fifty to-night," said the President, in a loud, cheerful, encouraging tone. "Come along with us, and we will do you good. Who will make up the fifty?"

For nearly five minutes the President waited, but no one came forward. Just as the pledge-book was about to be closed, there was a movement near the middle of the room, and then there came, tottering up the aisle, a feeble old man, with a head as white as snow. He seemed at least three-score and ten, for he was bent, and leaned on his staff, and his face was that of one very far advanced in years, though it was painfully disfigured by signs that none could look upon and misunderstand. He came up slowly, letting his stick fall at every step, and evidently trusting to it for support. There was a deep and breathless silence. The President, who had been talking almost incessantly for half an hour, urging, inviting, and encouraging persons to come forward, ceased his rambling address, and stepped forward a pace or two to meet the old man.

"Let me sign—let me sign!" he said, in a low, agitated voice, and the Secretary handed him a chair, into which he sank feebly, and then took the pen that was offered him. Hurriedly, as if he feared that his resolution would fail him, did he subscribe to the pledge. As he lifted the pen, a tear fell upon his name.

Silently he then arose, and slowly retired. His clothes were old and worn, and his coat seemed, from its appearance, to have seen almost a quarter of a century. But it was whole in every part, though patched with almost innumerable pieces, and of various shades. The few thin white locks that covered his head were smoothly combed and parted. The bosom of his shirt was clean but coarse, and a white cravat was tied about his neck with a care that indicated plainly enough, as did his whole appearance, that a woman's heart had cared for him, and a woman's hand been busy about his person.

I felt naturally, as did every one, a strong interest in this old man, and when the meeting broke up, I kept my eye upon him, and followed out close behind him. At the door I parted with my friend, as it was late and we had to go in opposite directions. The old man was but a few paces in advance of me, as I turned up Hanover street; I lingered behind, half resolved to follow him home. When he came to Market street, he crossed over and proceeded on westwardly. I was but a few paces behind him when he came to the narrow street now called Little Sharp street, mostly filled with poor and comfortless tenements, many of which are inhabited by blacks. Into this he turned, and

scarcely yet determined as to what I should do, I followed closely after. It was past the hour of ten, and the night was very cold. A keen northwester was blowing, and, as I turned into this little street, the wind came rushing down with chilly violence. The old man seemed to shrink in the cold blast, as if its benumbing influence had penetrated his thin garments, and reached every part of his body. I had proceeded onwards but a few steps when a female figure darted past me, and paused at the old man's side.

"Oh father!" said a low, anxious, trembling voice, "where have you been? I have searched after you for more than an hour."

The reply was made in so low a tone that I could not hear it.

"Are you not very cold?" the daughter asked, as the two moved on, the old man leaning upon the arm of his child for support.

"No, Kate," I could hear him say, "I am not very cold. But if you have been out for an hour, this bitter night, you must be chilled to the heart."

Just at this moment the two passed under a lamp, and I could see that the outer dress of the young woman was very poor and thin, and that it clung to her slender form as the wind swept past her, showing that beneath this were but few comfortable garments.

I felt the truth of what the old man said, for, although wrapped in a warm cloak, I was yet very sensible of the extreme cold. But the daughter made no reply.

No other word was spoken, or, at least none other caught my ear. In a few minutes the two stopped before a low frame house, of but a single story, with a loft, or attic, above. In this they immediately entered, and the door was quickly closed after them.

If I had felt an interest in the old man, I now felt a far deeper interest in that gentle being who, under such painful and trying circumstances, could cling to him as she evidently did, like a guardian angel. There was a deep-toned, unutterable tenderness in her voice, as she murmured the word "father," that moved my feelings. And there was something in her manner and carriage, obscurely seen in the feeble glimmering of the street lamp, that told of better days.

I lingered for a minute or two, irresolute, after the door had closed upon them, and then turned away, resolved to know more

about that old man and his daughter. What I subsequently learned, I will now present in the form of a simple, connected history. And if it makes the same impression upon the mind of the reader that it did upon my own, on turning the last page of the narrative, he will, even if he have said it a hundred times before, feel like saying more fervently still to the "Washingtonians," and others of kindred associations, "God speed you in your noble efforts!"

THE BROKEN MERCHANT.

Among the most prosperous young merchants of Baltimore, some years ago, who engaged in a profitable trade, was Wilson Hamilton. Inheriting from his father a handsome property, which was speedily doubled by his business enterprise, at his marriage at the age of thirty, he found his wealth increased so largely, by his wife's munificent portion, as to make him one of the richest men in the city. Of course, his social intercourse was with the highest class for wealth, refinement, and intelligence—and at that time, in Baltimore, the wealthy class combined, to a remarkable extent, refinement with a high degree of intelligence.

Then the custom of using wines and other and stronger drinks, on almost all occasions, was generally practiced, and none thought it an evil. If one gentleman called at the house of another, and liquor was not set out, it was esteemed a palpable breach of courtesy. No social circle, however select, assembled, without the accompaniment of glasses and decanters. On the dinner table of the private citizen was every day to be found wine and brandy, and all the members of his family, children and females, were in the habit of partaking freely. At weddings and funerals, and indeed on almost all occasions, the universal bottle-imp was present. Few, very few, had any fear of the consequences; and, indeed, at that time, the deplorable results that have since followed the general use of intoxicating drinks, were apparent in but rare instances. None seemed conscious of danger, or dreamed that any more evils were to be feared from the habitual use of drinking brandy or wine than from taking ordinary food.

Mr. Hamilton was of those who were particularly fond of a glass of generous wine. His cellar was stocked with many varieties, old and rare; not the artificial, drugged and brandied stuff that now so generally bears the name of wine, but pure and genuine—its vintage known, and its quality certain.

We will pass over, with these general observations, some seventeen or eighteen years of his life, from the time of his marriage until his only child, a daughter, had completed her sixteenth summer; only remarking, that, as might have been supposed, his attachment to his glass of wine had become, in that time, increased to a passion. Often and often, when he retired to his bed at night, would he be so much under its influence as to be scarcely conscious of anything. But few perceived it, for he was prudent; few imagined that the rich, respectable, and intelligent merchant was other than a sober man. During the early part of the day, his mind was clear and active; but a growing consciousness of his infirmity made him sensible that his interests would suffer if he gave any important attention to them while under the influence of wine, and therefore he had ceased to enter into any important business negotiations, or to close any bargains in the after part of the day.

The mother of Kate Hamilton died when her only child was but ten years of age; and losing one affectionate and fondly loved parent, the little girl clung to the other with a love increased tenfold. Mr. Hamilton had almost idolized his child from her birth, and now that he was all in all to her, and she all in all to him, his love, like hers, became tenfold more intense. The best teachers were, of course, employed for little Kate, who, being of an intelligent mind, as well as of an affectionate disposition, progressed rapidly in all the varied branches of instruction. Thus carefully provided with every thing necessary for her education and accomplishments, Kate Hamilton sprung up in a few years into young, blushing womanhood, beloved, admired, and honored for her affectionate nature, beautiful person, high-toned feelings, and enlarged intelligence.

But, alas for her happiness! the light of rational thought and perception that dawned upon her mind at sweet sixteen, revealed that which made her heart shrink and tremble with an indefinable fear.

She had often seen her father asleep in his great arm-chair, and thus pass away the evening. But the true cause of this she had never dreamed. And on some few occasions after dinner she had known him to retire to bed, and be too unwell to rise for tea. But no suspicion flashed across her mind that all was not right.

Every tender sympathy of her nature was then alive for her father, but no emotion of shame for him crossed her innocent heart.

From this delusive dream she had a sudden and painful awaking. It was on the very day that she had attained her sixteenth birthday. A few friends dined with her father, and, as had been the custom for two years past, she presided at the table. The wine passed freely, and Mr. Hamilton drank deeper than usual. The consequence was, that his mind grew obscured, and it became too evident to all present, except his daughter, that he was in the first stage of intoxication. But even she, at length, could not help noticing that her father talked strangely, and had an expression of countenance that she could not understand.

One of the company, who observed that Kate's eye was fixed anxiously upon her father, endeavored to divert her mind, and draw her away into conversation. She was becoming somewhat interested, when she noticed another person at the table glance with a slight contemptuous smile towards her father, and then at one of the party who sat opposite to him.

The blood rushed to her face, and her lip trembled with an instant rebuke. But she controlled herself with an effort. The individual who sat near her, and who saw what was passing, made a movement to rise from the table, which was followed by the rest of the company.

"Stop! stop!" cried Hamilton, in a thick voice—"wait until your host moves! Fill up your glasses again, gentlemen! And you, Kate, (a consciousness of his real situation seeming to flash upon his mind,) you can retire now: our friends here will excuse you."

"O certainly, certainly, Miss Hamilton!" was instantly responded. And the poor girl glided from the room, and hurried away trembling in every nerve, and her heart beating so rapidly as to produce a feeling of suffocation. As soon as she reached her chamber, she sunk into a chair, and gave way to a passionate gush of tears. For more than an hour she sat there, in a state of dreary wretchedness, the real cause of which was dimly, and very dimly, perceptible to her mind. But from this she was aroused by a sudden and painful shock.

"Queer goings on in the parlor, John says," remarked one servant to another, with a low chuckling laugh, pausing near the chamber door, and unconscious that she was there.

"Indeed! What's the matter? Is the old fellow drunk again!"

"Yes, indeed! And they are making great sport of him down there."

"Well, I'm right down sorry," said the other, "'specially for poor Miss Kate. It will break her heart if she should find it out. John must try and get him off to bed, and then she'll never know it."

"But she must find it out before long. He gets tipsy two or three times a week now, and never goes to bed at night, that he isn't as full as he can stick."

And then the two servants, after their word of gossip, glided away to attend to their respective duties.

If a painter could have seen Kate, as, starting to her feet, she stood listening with breathless eagerness, her face pale as death, her lips apart, her hands raised, and her eyes fixed with a wild stare, he might have sketched a picture, that to look upon, would have made the heart shrink and tremble.

The servants passed to their separate duties, the words they had spoken forgotten by them in the moment after they were uttered. But upon the heart of Kate Hamilton, those words were written as with a pen of fire. The word "drunkenness" was, in her mind, associated only with the lowest earthly degradation. Long after the noise of their retreating footsteps had ceased to sound along the passages, did the poor girl stand in the position described, as if suddenly turned into stone. From this state she was aroused by footsteps on the stairs, heavy, irregular and shuffling, the footsteps of those who evidently carried a burden of considerable weight. Her door stood ajar, and as she glanced eagerly through it, she saw the body of her father, borne in the hands of a servant and two of the visitors, merchants of the first standing in the city, with whose daughters she was on terms of the closest intimacy.

Her first impulse was to spring forward. But she remembered the cruel words of the servants. He was drunk!—and what could she do for him? In a few minutes the visitors and servants went down stairs, and then there was the sound of many footsteps in the passage below. After this came the opening and closing of the hall door, and then all was still. The guests of the dinner party had gone.

With a quick hand Kate swung open her chamber door, and glided with hurrying steps along the passages that led to her father's chamber. Entering this, she closed the door after her, and fastened it; and then went up to the bed, and looked down eagerly into her father's face. It was flushed with a deep red, and seemed swollen, and his breath came heavy and labored. She had often seen him thus before, but had never dreamed that it was the result of intoxication.

"Father!—Father!—Father!" she said, in a tender, earnest voice, laying her hand softly upon him. But she might as well have spoken to a stone.

"Father!" she repeated, in a louder voice, shaking him gently.

But the sleeper stirred not.

"O Father!" Dear father!" she again exclaimed in a still louder, and now trembling, choking voice, shaking him violently.

As well might she have called to the dead. For a moment longer she stood with a pale, agitated countenance bending over him, and then bursting into tears, sank down into a chair, covered her face with her hands, and burying both in the bed-clothes, continued to weep and sob for a long, long time. But the violence of her grief spent itself by its own power, and then there fell upon her spirits a deep, almost waveless calm, subsiding into a state of dreamy, half unconsciousness, that, in its turn, was followed by a profound slumber.

The dim shadows of evening were falling around as the heart-stricken girl awakened from this blessed sleep; blessed to her, because it brought forgetfulness. As she rose to her feet, the first object that met her eye was the still insensible form of the one she loved above all things upon the earth. Again she laid her hand upon him—again she called his name in the tenderest accents. But he heard her not. O, how cheerless and desolate did her heart feel as she turned away, and slowly passed from his room!

And now came thoughts of duty. Young as she was, she felt that she must control her feelings; that she must hide from other eyes all evidences of the canker-worm in her heart. Not even the domestics must know that the truth had been discovered to her. Descending to the parlor, she seated herself near the window, and there dwelt upon the only thoughts that could find a

place in her mind; thoughts of her father and his degradation. But when the servant came in with lights, and it became necessary to give some directions, she did so with a calmness that surprised even herself. It would have required a close observer, indeed, to have detected, in the tone of her voice, that within was wretchedness the most profound. Her face she could not so easily school, and it was therefore partly turned away.

Frequently through the evening did Kate go up to her father's room, and endeavor to awake him, but in vain. And at ten o'clock she sought her own pillow with a sadder heart than had ever throbbed in her bosom; sadder far than it was when she parted with the mother she had loved with a most tender and intense affection.

In the morning when she came down, she found her father in the parlor reading the newspaper. He did not look up as she entered, and she felt glad that he did not do so, for she dreaded to meet his eye, or hear his voice, now that she knew that he was perfectly in his rational mind. It was the feeling of the child that shrunk from perceiving in a parent the first evidence of conscious self-abasement.

When breakfast was announced, both proceeded to the dining-room, without uttering a word, and the meal passed in the most profound, thoughtful, oppressive silence; for Mr. H. had a painful consciousness, he hardly knew why, that Kate had perceived the truth. How could a parent, who loved his beautiful, innocent child as Wilson Hamilton really loved, nay, almost idolized his Kate, ever again touch the maddening poison that could thus put between them a feeling of shame, and a feeling of sorrow, whose poignancy cannot be told in words? Alas! who knows the subtle enticements of the circean draught but he who has heard the voice of the syrens. The wine was placed on the dinner-table as usual, and as usual Mr. Hamilton drank of it freely but not to intoxication.

When Kate went next into company, it was with new feelings. Nowhere, nor in any scenes, did she find the same unalloyed pleasure that had heretofore been her constant attendant. If, for a few moments, the bright attractions which ever present themselves before the minds of the young and ardent, would win her away into delightful anticipations, a single dark thought would call her back, and an inwardly breathed sigh attest the sad truth,

that for her, indeed, had become changed the hues of all things earthly. Some noticed the change, but dreamed not of the painful cause. The more subdued and thoughtful tone of her mind, and its corresponding effect in her manner, were noted as one of the phenomena, unaccounted for by the mass, which result from a young and happy creature's first introduction into the world of men and women, where each acts and reacts upon others in a thousand different forms.

Young, beautiful, accomplished, and the daughter of one of the most wealthy merchants in the city, it is not to be supposed that Kate Hamilton would long remain without a suitor for her hand. Among those who sought her favor, was a young man named Bailey, the son of a merchant, who, like her father, was rich. He was of attractive person and manners, liberally educated, and associated, though but just of age, with his father in business. Of all who had visited her, this young man won most deeply upon her feelings, which, touched as they were by the condition of a parent most dearly loved, were of a tender and confiding character. At the time his attentions became particular, Kate was about eighteen, two years having passed since she made the discovery—a fearful one to her—of her father's strange propensity. How far this young man was worthy of her, and how far she was reposing upon a just hope in leaning upon his apparent affection will appear from the following conversation which took place between him and his father, on the occasion of young Bailey's declaring his wish to address Miss Hamilton.

"I don't know about that, James. I am a little afraid of Hamilton."

"Why so, father?" asked the young man, with something of concern in the tone of his voice.

"Do you know that he drinks rather hard?"

"No; and I cannot believe it."

"Seeing is believing, they say," was the sententious reply.

"What do you mean, father?"

"Why, I mean that I have seen him drunk myself."

"You have?"

"Yes, I have; and more than once. And what is worse, he drinks deeper and deeper. It's my candid opinion that he hasn't gone to bed perfectly sober a single time for the last five years."

"But what has that to do with Kate, father?"

"Humph! A strange question for a young man like you to ask, truly! I will tell you what it has to do with her: If her father goes on as he has been going on for the last six months, he will not be worth a stiver in two years."

"How so?"

"Why, he is not himself one half of his time, and therefore does a very unsafe business. Fifty thousand dollars will not cover his losses in the past six months, and all from the miserably blind speculations into which he has entered. Formerly he was one of the shrewdest merchants in the city. Then he never made a bad operation; now he rarely makes a good one. The reason is obvious: He drinks too freely. For the past five years, you could never transact business with him after dinner, because he knew that he was in an unfit state to do any thing judiciously. But now, he is all the while in that unfit state, and every thing with him is in confusion."

"Poor Kate!" the young man said, sympathizingly.

"Yes, I pity the girl, too, for she is handsome and intelligent, and I have no doubt would make you a good enough wife. But I rather think you had better look somewhere else."

"But perhaps he would settle something on her."

"Not he. He's as proud as Lucifer, and if he were approached on that point, would be roused at once. No, no, James. You had better turn your thoughts somewhere else."

"But there is no one whom I like so well."

"Oh! as to that, liking comes natural enough after you are married. There is ——'s daughter. Why don't you go and see her?"

"Because I don't like her."

"But her father is the richest merchant in the city: and she is his only child."

"I know. But I can never choose her."

"Well; there is old L——'s daughter Angeline. Try her."

"I can't do it, father."

"You are too particular by half, James. I am afraid you are a little weak in this matter; and have got a notion in your head that there must be a deal of red-hot love in the question. Red-hot nonsense!"

"Well, perhaps I am a little weak that way; but I can't help it. Kate Hamilton is the sweetest girl in the town, that's clear.

And I don't see but we shall have money enough, even if her father should go to the wall, which I hope will not be the case."

"Don't flatter yourself, boy," the old man said, with rather a severe expression of countenance. He *will* go to the wall, that's clear. He's a confirmed drunkard—that's the plain A, B, C, of it, and there's no hope for him! Who ever heard of a reclaimed drunkard? I have lived some fifty years now, and I am sure I never have, nor any body else, I presume. No, no, James; poverty and degradation await Wilson Hamilton, and no human power can save him. And let me tell you, that with my consent, you never unite your fortunes with his. Once his son-in-law, and you become involved in his business when the pinch comes, and when he falls, you will fall with him."

"There is something in that, certainly," the young man replied in a thoughtful tone. "And it behooves me to pause and consider well what I do."

"That it does, my boy! spoken like the son of your father. Look before you leap, has always been my motto, and I have thus far kept out of the thornbushes."

Still, James Bailey, when he made the effort to keep away from Kate, found that his feelings were involved far more than he had supposed. The trial was exceedingly painful, and, therefore, he determined that he would at least permit himself the gratification of being in her company frequently; and so he continued a regular visitor.

The description which his father had given of Mr. Hamilton's habits, must suffice for the reader. It was, alas! too true. The consequence was, as intimated, that his business was fast falling into confusion, and his losses were frequent and heavy. But none of these had the effect to make him give up, in any degree, the active cause. They only soured his mind, and deranged the true business perceptions that were left. Poor Kate was now the constant witness of her father's degradation. Rarely a day passed that he did not drink so deeply as to confuse his ideas, and there was scarcely a night that he did not go reeling, or have to be carried, in a state of insensibility, to bed.

About this time an important rise in the price of cotton was anticipated, and a few capitalists in various cities commenced purchasing and storing considerable quantities. Among others, Mr. Hamilton invested largely, buying, and giving his notes, with a

recklessness as to the aggregate amount, that could only be accounted for from the fact that he was not half of his time, really in his right mind. The effect of such a proceeding was, of course, to run prices up, and Hamilton continued to purchase at the most advanced rates. Then came a pause in the market—a slight evidence of fluctuation, and the price fell half a cent. The wise ones sold immediately. But many, Hamilton among the rest, held on. The price "he knew would go up." He "would not sell for an advance of three cents per pound." But it went down, down, down, falling in the course of three months from twenty to ten cents per pound; and when Mr. Hamilton was compelled to sell, he was loser by one hundred thousand dollars. He could not meet all the engagements that he had entered into, and, of course, was compelled to make an assignment of his whole property—to become that dreaded thing, a BROKEN MERCHANT. This nearly maddened, instead of sobering him, and caused him to drink deeper and deeper. For a week after he had passed over his property into the hands of trustees, he was almost constantly in a state of insensibility.

When this distressing event occurred, Kate was only at the tender age of nineteen, but wise, from suffering, far beyond her years. Only the evening before the failure of her father had Mr. Bailey called upon her, and sat with her until a late hour. In his conversation, and in his voice, during the time were often words and tones that fell upon her heart with a peculiar and sweet melody, stirring thoughts and feelings of tenderness and affection. In his "good night," and in the parting pressure of his hand, were a language that she interpreted, to her own heart, and that caused it to tremble with delightful emotions.

Only once again did she look upon his face; only once again did she hear the sound of his voice. Her father's failure decided the question in his mind. He could not wed a portionless girl.

From the wreck of a large estate, the trustees, after settling every claim against it, and deducting their own fees for the management, paid over to Mr. Hamilton the meagre remnant of five thousand dollars. This sum, with the splendid furniture of his large mansion, was all that was left him at the age of fifty. A great portion of the latter was sold, and with his daughter, he sank at once into obscurity.

A new business was commenced on the small capital that he

could command, but this soon became involved, as a natural consequence arising out of his unchanged habits. Two years after, he failed a second time, and what was worse, was considerably in debt, after every thing had been swept from him. Not only were the goods in his store taken, but the furniture of his dwelling shared the same fate, and with his child, he was left with the most scanty household articles, merely such as are protected by the laws of Maryland from the creditor. But the evil stopped not here. One of the creditors, more selfish and cruel than the rest, persecuted him still further, and to run the full cup over, had him arrested, after a suit and the rendition of judgment, and carried to jail. This occurred a few weeks after everything had been taken from them. He had carefully concealed from Kate this danger that was lurking in his way, and when arrested, she had no intimation of it.

"Come back soon, father," she said, laying her hand tenderly upon his arm, as he was about leaving on that afternoon, while the tears came into her eyes. "Every thing is so dreary and desolate here"—and she glanced around the room, that was dismantled of nearly every article except a single table, and four common chairs. Carpets, looking-glasses, mahogany tables, sofas; in a word, everything but the articles named had been seized and carried off by the rapacious creditors, some of whom, could every heart-wrung tear of that innocent girl been changed to a diamond, would have tortured her until the last farthing owed to them by her father had been paid.

"I shall be home soon," the old man replied, as he was closing the door after him.

Hour after hour the lonely girl sat near a window, leaning her head upon her hand; sometimes giving way to tears, and sometimes brooding with dark and desponding feelings over a condition that seemed almost bereft of hope. What distressed her most of all was the infatuation of her father. She felt that he would now sink lower and lower; and that, be his condition what it might, she must and would cling to him. Already had she begun to ponder on the means by which the labor of her hands could be made to support them both; but on this subject she thought and thought in vain.

"What *can* I do? What *shall* I do?" she said, after musing long, in an entire abstraction of thought from all things external.

The sound of her own voice aroused her, and she perceived that the twilight was falling dimly around.

"Why does he stay so late?" she said, rising and looking out into the street. Then she turned away, and after lighting a lamp, proceeded to prepare the evening meal. Since the seizure and sale of their furniture, she had retained no domestic, performing all the duties required with her own hands, all unused as they were to toil.

The supper ready, she waited long in painful anxiety, but her father came not. Hour after hour passed, but she looked and listened in vain for some sign of his coming. How, or where to seek him, she knew not: for when she thought of doing so, it was past the hour of eleven. Seating herself by the window, she remained looking out into the street, and listening anxiously to every footstep that approached, until long after midnight. Then, as all hope of his return before morning faded from her mind, she rested her arms upon the table near which she sat, and burying her head in them, she sank into a troubled sleep. When she awoke from this, the broad light of day was streaming into the room.

Starting to her feet, her first impulse, after the full return of consciousness, was to go out and seek for her father.

"But, where shall I go?"

This was a question that she could not answer, though she thought of it long and anxiously: for she had not the most remote idea what could keep him away.

"I will wait for an hour or two," she at length said—"by that time he will either come home, or I shall hear from him."

In this state of most distressing uncertainty, she remained until nearly nine o'clock, when she could bear it no longer. As she was just passing from the door, to seek for him, she knew not how or where, a rough looking, hard-featured man stepped up to her, and said—

"Is this where Mr. Hamilton lives?"

"Yes, sir. What of him? Where is he?" was the eager response.

"He asked me last night to hand you this;" the man said, producing a letter, which Kate grasped as he reached it to her, and broke the seal with hasty but trembling hands. As she did so, the man turned away, and left her. The letter, or brief note rather, read thus:

"BALTIMORE JAIL.

"DEAR KATE:—The harpies have done their worst at last. On leaving the house this afternoon, I was arrested for debt, and sent here. But do not, my dear child, let it break down your spirits, already well-nigh crushed to the earth. Hope for the best, and if you can feel like coming to this dreadful place, I should like very much to see you."

There was no hesitation, no lingering on the part of Kate. The moment she had finished reading the note, she placed it in her bosom, and hurriedly leaving the house, bent her steps towards the city prison. The girl's wild and disordered look, as she hastened along the street, attracted many eyes, but she saw nothing, heard nothing—not even the remark of one who had known her, and been a companion—

"As I live, that was Kate Hamilton!"

"Ah, indeed!" was the reply of the individual to whom this was addressed, made in a tone half indifferent—"The daughter of old Hamilton, who failed about two years ago?"

"The same, and a sweet girl Kate was. I have never seen her before since she left our circles. What can be the matter with her now? Where can she be going? Poor thing! I am afraid, from her look, that she has become lost to virtue."

"Most likely," was the cruel rejoinder—cruel, could it have reached the ear of the unfortunate subject, but falling harmless where it was uttered.

"I am told," pursued the other, "that her father has become a common drunkard, and has been frequently seen, of late, reeling about the streets in a state of intoxication. What a sad trial it must have been to Kate! But I suppose she is past that now. Ah me! it makes me sad to think of it."

While these remarks were passing, the subject of them was hurrying on her way, with but a single painful idea in her mind —the idea of her father, imprisoned. A walk of some twenty-five minutes brought her to the outer gate of the gloomy building.

"Can I see Mr. Hamilton?" she asked with a hurried and agitated voice.

"I really can't say, Miss," replied the gate-keeper, in a careless tone. "Who is he, or what is he?"

To this strange question the daughter could not reply, for she

did not understand its import, and she stood looking into the man's face with a bewildered air.

"What is he in for? murder, stealing, or debt?" the gate-keeper now asked in a quiet, unfeeling tone, returning the earnest look of Kate with a bold stare.

The blood mounted to the neck, face, and temples of the daughter, as she replied, with something of indignation in her voice—

"He is in for debt, sir."

"Oh, well. You can see him then, if you wish,"—and the gate-keeper turned the key. The large iron gate was swung slowly open, and Kate passed through. As it closed with a loud clanking sound, the heart of the poor girl almost ceased its pulsations. Her limbs became feeble and unsteady, as she attempted to ascend the long acclivity and many steps that led to the prison. A dimness came over her eyes, and a faintness and languor spread through her whole frame. But one thought of her father —one impulse of pure affection—aroused her again, and she proceeded on with a slow but steady pace. On reaching the main entrance to the building she encountered some two or three of the turnkeys, who were lounging about that part of the jail. All eyes were instantly turned upon her, as she shrunk impulsively from each unfeeling glance. But a sense of duty aroused her, and the thought of her father dispelled every feeling of weakness.

"I wish to see Mr. Hamilton," she said.

"A debtor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Come this way."

And she followed the speaker until both stood in front of a large iron-grated gateway, or door, opening into a long spacious hall, from each side of which went off the entrances to the different debtors' apartments. As they paused here, the turnkey called out in a loud voice,

"Hamilton!"

"Hamilton!" responded a prisoner who was lingering in the large hall, or main avenue, just mentioned, and in a few minutes the old man emerged from one of the rooms, and came forward with a slow and feeble step. As he reached the iron door, Kate extended a hand between the bars and said, bursting at the same time into tears—

"Oh my father! my dear father!"

"My dear child! Do not give way so!"—sobbed the old man while the tears gushed, at the same time, from his own eyes.

The turnkey, who had lingered a moment, although used to such scenes, felt touched, and moved away.

"Who has done this, father?" Kate soon found herself composed enough to ask. "Tell me, and I will go to him. He cannot be unmoved by the petition of a child for her father."

"He is a hard-hearted man, my child; and I am sure will not hear you."

"Yes, father, he will hear me, he *must* hear me. Who is it? Tell me!"

"Old Mr. Bailey is the man; and he has never been known to forgive a debtor."

"Surely it cannot be Mr. Bailey!" Kate said, in a low tone of sad surprise—"Oh no, it cannot be he! Or, perhaps he knows nothing of the extremity to which you have been driven. Perhaps he does not know that you are here."

The old man shook his head, mournfully.

"He knows it but too well, Kate."

"But I will go to him, father. He cannot, he *shall* not put me off."

"You can go, child. But I fear the effort will be in vain."

"How much do you owe him?"

"Over two hundred dollars."

Again the true hearted girl extended her hand, through the iron bars that imprisoned the dear object of her solicitude, and grasped with a strong pressure the hand of her father.

"I will be back again soon, dear father," she said, trying to assume a cheerful voice—"And I feel confident that I shall bring you good news."

"I fear not. But still I will hope. And may heaven bless you, my child!" the prisoner uttered fervently.

"Be of good cheer!" and as the daughter said this, she pressed, again, affectionately, the hand that was held in hers, and then turning away, glided swiftly out of the prison.

Once beyond the walls of that gloomy abode, the first serious thoughts of the duty she had imposed upon herself, came up in her mind with painful distinctness. Mr. Bailey, the father of him who had won her heart, and whose image still lived in her

memory, a dear and cherished thing, was the man whose selfishness and inhumanity had thrown her own father into prison, and to him she must go, and sue for mercy. The very thought made her feel sick and faint. Since James Bailey had parted from her more than two years before, with a warmth and tenderness in his manner even unusual for him, she had neither heard his voice nor seen his face. The fear of encountering him, therefore, made her shrink from her duty with an inconceivably painful reluctance. But that duty could not be shunned, and she went onwards in the performance of it, with something of the same feeling with which it may be supposed the martyrs of old went up to the stake.

It was about eleven o'clock, on the same morning, that James Bailey turned his head away from the desk at which he was sitting, to glance towards the door of the counting room, and observe who it was that had swung it open. The visitor was a neatly dressed young woman, but her head was partly turned from him, so that he could not see her face. She closed the door after her quietly, and then moved towards the part of the room where old Mr. Bailey sat before a table, covered with papers and packages. Here she paused, and the old man looked up into her face with a severe, frowning scrutiny. In vain did the visitor essay to speak her errand. Her tongue seemed paralysed, and refused to perform its office.

"Well, what do you want, young woman?" Mr. Bailey inquired in a rough voice, and with a coarse, familiar manner.

"My—my—my name is Kate Hamilton," stammered out the poor girl, whose heart fluttered in her bosom like a newly caged bird.

"Kate Hamilton!" ejaculated the old man, instantly rising to his feet, his whole manner becoming changed and excited. "And pray, Miss, what is your business with me?"

"My father"—was all that Kate could utter.

"Is in jail, and shall rot there!" exclaimed Mr. Bailey, still more excited as the interview proceeded.

"O, sir, do not say so," the daughter urged, her voice becoming calmer, and her self-possession beginning to return. "Remember that my father is old and poor. Keeping him in jail cannot pay the debt. The only hope for that, is in releasing him."

"Ha! ha!—And a precious hope that would be! No—no.—He wilfully neglected his business, and, in consequence, cheated me out of more than two hundred dollars, and he shall be made an example of for the good of society. So go home, girl, and make yourself easy about it. My mind is made up. He shall die in jail—the drunken vagabond!"

Anger with Mr. Bailey was a species of intoxication, and under its influence, like others under the influence of wine, he said things that in sober moments he would not have uttered. But his last bitter sentence was not, for this, any the less wounding to the feelings of Miss Hamilton. In spite of her strong effort at self-control, this cruel remark so touched her, that she hid her face in her hands, and wept and sobbed for a few moments passionately. From this she was aroused by the remark—

"You needn't suppose, Miss, that your tears can have any effect upon me. I have seen too many in my day. And now, I advise you to go home, and let this matter rest. Your father is a thousand times better off in jail than if he were out."

"I cannot go, sir," Kate now said, looking up, and endeavoring to dry her tears—"until you have consented to release my father."

"Go home, girl!"

"Let me implore you, sir. Remember what he once was. Remember the former condition of her who now pleads with you. Think how wrung her spirit must be, and let those tears urge you. O, sir, do not thus harden your heart!"

"Go out of this office, I tell you!"

"O, sir, my father cannot stay there! Look at me! Here, I plead for him thus (sinking on her knees, and clasping her hands together.) O, sir, hear me!—hear me!" and her voice sunk into a low, choking sob.

"Away! I will not hear you!" the old man said in a voice loud and furious.

Then advancing towards her, he lifted her strongly by one arm to her feet—led her to the door—opened it, thrust her out, closed it, and then returned to his seat, and commenced poring over his papers. But little, however, of their sense was apparent to his mind. As he did so his son turned from his desk, and went out through the back door of the counting-room.

Mechanically Kate Hamilton turned away from the merchant's

counting-room, and moved along the pavement, scarcely conscious of her own identity. Her mind was bewildered, and her thoughts confused. From this dreamy state of obscurity and wretchedness, she was startled by the sound of a voice close to her ear—an old familiar voice, to which, even in memory, her heart had ever echoed with a quickened pulsation.

"Miss Hamilton!"

She paused and turned quickly. It was James Bailey who stood by her side.

"Take this," he said—"tell no one where it came from: And may God in heaven bless you!"

Thus saying, in an agitated tone, he slipped a small piece of paper into her hand, and turning away, glided at once from her sight.

The whole scene passed so quickly that it seemed like a bewildering dream. But the piece of paper in her hand attested its reality. Glancing down upon it, she saw with an emotion that made the tears spring to her eyes that it was a check for two hundred and twenty-five dollars. Without a thought more, she turned her steps again towards the jail, and almost ran the whole of the way.

The check was for the exact amount of debt and costs, and was at once received by the warden, and old Mr. Hamilton set at liberty. This imprisonment had the effect to sober and subdue his mind. He inwardly resolved that he would drink no more. This resolution he did not communicate to his daughter. The subject of his love of drink was one to which the most remote allusion had never been made by one to the other. Neither could speak of it—the father nor the child. But she saw in a day or two, that there had occurred a change, and her heart trembled in her bosom with a new hope. As the house in which they lived could not be retained, on account of the high rent, and because they had no furniture to put in it, a new home was sought. Far in the suburbs, a very small house was obtained at the low rent of five dollars a month, and into this, the once wealthy merchant and his beautiful and accomplished daughter, removed. No servant could, of course, be employed, for there were no means with which to pay one, and indeed, little prospect of even the barest necessaries of life. All the work of the house,

even the washing and ironing, as well as the cooking, fell upon Kate.

In the second week after their removal to this new home, if a home it could be called, and when both began to despond as to the means of obtaining the simplest necessaries of life, a store-keeper in Franklin street, who had at one time bought largely of Mr. Hamilton, and who had always felt a regard for him, that his misconduct could not entirely extinguish, offered him a situation in his store at four hundred dollars a year. This was gladly accepted. And now there was a glimmering of light upon the gloomy path of his child. Every night her father came home sober, and brought her each week the full amount of wages that he received. In their new condition, their wants were few, and some eight dollars each week supplied them all.

One evening, about three months after this happy change, Kate sat waiting for her father's return, with a feeling of unusual cheerfulness. She heard his hand at last upon the latch, and rose to her feet to meet him with a smiling welcome. But a single glance at his face, sufficed to tell the fatal truth, that he had again been drinking—this, his unsteady step confirmed, and her heart sank like lead in her bosom. No word was uttered by either. The meal passed in painful and oppressive silence, and after it was over, Mr. Hamilton took his hat and went out. It was after nine o'clock when he returned in a state of reeling intoxication, and sought his bed. In the morning he went, as usual, to the store in which he was employed. At dinner time, it was plainly evident to the quick eye of his daughter, that he had again been drinking; and at night he could scarcely walk straight when he came in. After supper he went out again, and staid until late, and then returned as he had the evening before, and went reeling and stumbling up to his bed. When Saturday night came, he gave Kate but four dollars, instead of eight. She received it without any remark upon the smallness of the sum, and he gave it her without any reason for the diminution. But oh, how sad, and wretched, and hopeless she felt!

Two months after he became so utterly unfit to be trusted, from incapacity, that he was discharged from his situation. When this fact became known to his daughter, she endeavored to nerve herself for severer trials. Though bent, and swayed, and bruised by the storm, her spirits were not altogether broken.

There had been time enough for reflection since the utter ruin of their worldly prospects, and during that time she had not been entirely unthoughtful as to what course she would have to pursue should her father entirely abandon himself to drink. Her pure, deep, unselfish love for him was the guide to her decision—a decision not in words, nor even, in her mind, in the form of words; but in the perception of her duty, flowing from the very love she bore him. That decision was a resolution (not, as has just been said, made in a form of words, even mentally spoken,) never to leave him while she had life; to devote herself to him, and to take care of him through all the grades of human suffering through which she might have to pass; to die with him and for him, if she should be reduced to that extremity.

Such an instinctive resolution, when the time came for action, made her more thoughtful, and prompted her to cast about in her mind for the probable means of a support for them both. But here she found herself in a difficulty that seemed almost insurmountable. What could she do? How could she earn money? For herself, if there were none but herself to care for, she could readily perceive that it would be no hard matter to enter some family, and make herself useful in various ways, thus securing a home both comfortable and respectable. But under the circumstances in which she found herself placed, this was now out of the question. Her father needed, and would need more and more, her care and attention. Without her hands to provide for and minister to his wants, he must sink into a state the bare idea of which make her heart sink.

It then became absolutely necessary that she should seek some employment by which she could earn money. While pondering this subject in her mind, a plan presented itself which she proceeded at once to adopt.

In one of the humble tenements near that in which she lived with her father, resided a widow, who, by her own exertions, supported herself and three small children. This woman, whose name was Erwin, had seen her own ups and downs in life, and being of a kind, benevolent turn of mind, had naturally a feeling of sympathy for Kate in her lonely condition. Very frequently she would drop in during an afternoon, and spend a little while in cheerful conversation. She was not herself a murmurer, and as Kate never alluded, even remotely, to her father's conduct, nor to her

own painful feelings, these interviews were always pleasant. Gradually she began to have a tender regard for Mrs. Erwin, and to feel that her society was becoming more necessary to her. And especially did the fact that Mrs. Erwin could, by the labor of her own hands, support herself and children, encourage her to think that she might be equally successful.

A few days after her father had lost his situation, Kate called in to see Mrs. Erwin, for the purpose of making a few inquiries as to how she must proceed to get some kind of work.

"What is this you are doing, Mrs. Erwin?" she asked, lifting from the table the upper part of a shoe lined and bound.

"Binding shoes," Mrs. Erwin replied.

"Is it easy work!" Kate proceeded to ask.

"It is not very easy; but it is simple, and after you get used to it you can do very well at it."

"How much do you make at this kind of work?"

"Some two or three dollars a week—and even four, if I have nothing else to do."

"Can you get as much of it as you wish?"

"O yes."

Then came a pause, during which Kate was pondering whether the next question she wished above all to have answered, should be asked. At last she said, and her voice trembled—

"Do you think I could get any of it to do, Mrs. Erwin?"

"You, child? Why yes, I suppose so. That is if you know how to close and bind pretty well."

"But I don't know anything about it. Still, don't you think I might learn?"

"Certainly, child. And if you wish to learn, it will give me the greatest pleasure in the world to teach you."

"You are very kind, Mrs. Erwin," was Kate's simple, heartfelt acknowledgment.

"And if, in anything else I can aid you, Miss Hamilton," continued the warm-hearted woman, "speak it out freely. I never think it a trouble to help another all that is in my power."

"Will you show me now?" asked Kate.

"Certainly."

And Mrs. Erwin proceeded to give her instructions in the humble art and mystery of closing and binding shoes. Her anxious desire to learn made the task an easy one, and before she rose up

to return home she had performed the whole operation of closing and binding two pairs of ladies' shoes.

"Do you think they will do, Mrs. Erwin?" she asked earnestly.

"Yes, indeed! You have done them beautifully."

"And the next question is, do you think I can get work at once?"

"I should think so, Miss Hamilton. At any rate, I will speak for you this very afternoon. I have to go down town, and can do it for you just as well as not."

Mrs. Erwin was as good as her word. When she returned from her errand "down town," she brought a dozen pairs of shoes for Kate, which were received by her with emotions of heartfelt gratitude.

"What have you got here?" asked her father, coming in half an hour after, a good deal under the influence of liquor.

"Only some shoes to bind," Kate said, and her heart trembled as she felt that what she was doing was a keen rebuke to him, and might be so construed.

"And what are you doing with shoes to bind, pray?" he proceeded.

"I thought I would try and do a little something, father. You know we haven't much."

"Do a little something?—bind shoes?—humph! Kate Hamilton bind shoes, indeed? Is the girl crazy?"

"But, dear father," she said, rising to her feet, and laying her hand soothingly upon his shoulder, while she assumed a smile, "You know we are very poor, and that I ought to do all I can to lighten your burdens, for you are old and cannot do much now. I would rather do it, father."

"Bind shoes?" the old man repeated, with a bewildering, indignant surprise. "Kate Hamilton bind shoes for a living? The thing is preposterous! No—no—put them away, Kate. We shall be rich again; I know we shall."

To humor her father Kate did put the shoes away, but as he soon fell into a state of half stupefaction, she took a single one in her hand, and sat down near the window, with her back towards him, and went on with her work. After supper he went out, as was now his almost constant habit, and she was left alone to continue her humble employment.

But he never after attempted to interfere with her, in this or in anything else that she chose to do. By the most unremitting labor, Kate now managed to earn from three to four dollars a week, nearly all of which it took to procure food and fuel, and pay the rent. As for her own clothing, she still had a good deal of her former stock left, and by much attention to her father's garments she made out to keep him tolerably respectable in appearance. Thus she went on, for the long period of about ten years, during which time her father had become more and more degraded; not, however, without having made several efforts to reform himself, but without any permanent effect, and always sinking lower after every such struggle. The ardent thirst for liquor which was constantly upon him, caused him to resort to every means that suggested itself for earning a little money, that this desire might be gratified. The last of these, and the employment at which he had been engaged for more than a year prior to the time when we again introduce him to the reader, was that of turning a wheel. For this, a duty that he could perform as well when half intoxicated as when sober, he received three dollars a week, every cent of which was spent in drink. As the turning shop in which he thus worked was near the centre of the city, Kate removed with him to a hovel, in Little Sharp near Fayette street, that had formerly been occupied by blacks. It was a mean, comfortless tenement; but it gave them shelter, and for her father's sake Kate entered it without a murmur.

Ten years have passed since Kate Hamilton made the first effort to earn money for the support of herself and her father, and since that time her toil has been, night and day, almost incessant. Let us look in upon her again.

It is night—a night in December. We find her in a small room containing a bed, and a few poor articles of furniture, such as a pine table, two or three old chairs, &c. Still, there is an air of neatness, as far as neatness can be found in such a place; but no air of comfort. A few sticks are burning on the hearth, near which she is seated, and by the light of a dim lamp, endeavoring to sew.

Can that indeed be Kate Hamilton? Alas! that such a change should ever pass upon a child of earth. How thin and pale her face! how attenuated her whole frame! How large, and bright, and almost unearthly in its expression, is her dark

eye! And her lips are compressed painfully together, and colorless. See her pause now, and press her hand to her side, while an expression of weariness and pain settles upon every feature of her face. Hark to that hollow, resounding, racking cough, and see how her whole frame is convulsed! Alas! alas! poor martyr to filial affection, the grave is surely almost ready for thee—and sweeter there will be thy sleep than any that has locked up thy senses for many, many weary years.

Thus as we have seen her, did she toil on, sometimes pausing wearily, and resting her head upon the little work-stand before her—sometimes holding her hand hard against her side, as if suffering acute pain, and sometimes giving way to a convulsive fit of coughing. As the evening passed on, the fire sunk lower upon the hearth, but instead of replenishing it, she only drew nearer and nearer. But she was evidently chilled, for a slight shudder would ever and anon run through her frame.

It was nearly ten o'clock, when she put by her work. Having done this, she took from a closet her bonnet, and a thin, faded shawl, which she wrapped around her shoulders, and then passed out into the dark, narrow, deserted street. The night was very cold, and the wind penetrated her thin garments, and caused her to shrink shivering in the wintry blast. But she seemed not to heed this, as she directed her footsteps hurriedly towards Fayette street, on emerging into which she passed along, until she came to Park street, up which she steadily pursued her way. Just before she came to Lexington street, she turned into one of the low taverns, or grogshops which then existed in that part of the street, and perhaps exist there still.

"Is father here?" she said to the keeper of the house, not perceiving him she sought.

"No, he is not!" was the gruff reply.

"No, dear—he 's not here"—half sung a drunken man, reeling towards her, with an air of familiarity, that caused her to turn and glide hurriedly away.

"Stop! stop!" he cried after her, opening quickly the door that she had closed. But his pursuit was only a feigned one.

Poor Kate trembled in every limb, as she retraced her steps down Park street, until she came to the intersection of Liberty street. There she entered a grog-shop that still stands at the corner of an alley running up to Howard street. As she did so,

her eye fell upon her father, seated on a bench, and fast asleep. She went up to him, and after shaking him repeatedly, awoke him so far as to make him comprehend that she had come for him. Then he arose, mechanically, and followed her out, and walked by her side, until they had gained their humble dwelling. Here he only waited long enough to divest himself of his old, much worn and much patched coat, before he threw himself upon the bed. Ere he had done this, his daughter had turned down the clothes for him. Then she drew off his shoes, and covered him up snugly all around. As for him, he was fast asleep, almost the moment his head touched the pillow. Kate then went to the hearth, raked up the coals, threw on another stick, and resumed her work. It was nearly twelve o'clock when she laid this by, evidently more from excessive weariness, than from any wish to abate her labors. She then threw an extra quilt over her father, tucked it in all around with a careful hand, and taking up her light, ascended to the loft above. There, upon the floor, lay her humble bed. Bending meekly on her knees for a few minutes, she lifted her heart above, and prayed for more patience, and more submission under her hard lot. Then, quickly disrobing herself, she sought a few hours' repose. But for a time, even this seemed denied her, for a racking cough kept her awake for nearly an hour. Finally, she sunk away, and slept soundly until the morning.

When she descended to renew her daily toil, she found that her father had arisen and gone out as usual. Until his nerves were steadied by a morning draught of his accustomed stimulus, he could not handle his knife or lift a cup to his mouth. The frugal meal was ready when he returned, and he ate it in silence. How painful and oppressive that silence!—but it was only a portion of that which ever brooded over their little household. They seemed, that father and his child, like moving automata. Words rarely passed the lips of either. He came and went at stated intervals, and she ministered to his every want that it was in her power to meet, with an affectionate solicitude that showed how tenderly her heart still clung to her parent, degraded and brutalized as he was. But she could not converse with him; for there was no topic upon which they could feel a mutual interest. Indeed, his mental perceptions had all become obtuse, and the action of his mind feeble. He seemed to have but one love—that

of strong drink;—and but one system of reasoning—that which considered the means by which that love could be gratified. How like a living death must have been the whole tenor of that devoted daughter's existence! Possessing a refined and cultivated taste, yet surrounded with nothing but what tended to offend that taste; educated and intelligent, yet cut off from books and society; modest and virtuous, yet compelled to seek her father, night after night, in haunts where congregated the vile and abandoned, and there to meet their insults and brave their ridicule! But she had never wavered a moment from her purpose, though more than once offered a home by some who had accidentally crossed her path, and felt and appreciated her worth and her deplorable condition. Without her constant care, that old man, her father, could not have survived, probably, a week, or, at best, would have been carried to the Almshouse. This she saw—this she felt. And her heart was strong in its filial purposes.

When breakfast was over, Mr. Hamilton arose and Kate rose also. She took down from a nail his old hat, the fur of which had long since disappeared, and drew, from habit, the sleeve of her dress across it. Then she took from the mantlepiece a hair-brush, and while the old man inclined his head towards her, carefully parted and smoothed the few gray hairs that still lingered, in wintry wreaths, about his aged temples. His cravat was likewise adjusted, and his old, thread-bare coat brushed. Then she placed his hat upon his head, and he turned from her and she was left alone. All this passed in silence, and seemed as if it were only mechanical. But there was, on one side at least, a feeling heart and unwavering affection.

On leaving the house, old Mr. Hamilton went direct to the grog-shop from which his daughter had taken him on the night before, and called for brandy and water. Of this he swallowed eagerly, a quantity sufficient to make any ordinary drinker completely intoxicated. Thence he proceeded to the turner's shop where he was employed, and took his station at the wheel. It was almost impossible to believe that that old man, as he sat all through the day, turning, turning that everlasting wheel, with his thin gray hairs rising and falling with the motion of his body, was the same with the rich merchant, who, not over fifteen or twenty years previous, was accounted one of the most wealthy men in the city. Then moving in the highest circle—now scoffed

in the street by boys, and despised by even the chimney-sweeper; then high-minded and intelligent, now acted upon by only one degrading passion, and sinking all rational thought in the single contemplation of the means whereby to gratify his evil appetite. About every two hours he had to leave his place, and go out for his glass of brandy. This the owner of the shop had ceased to object to, for he knew that the miserable old man would not do without it. At night, when supper was over, he went out, as on the evening previous, and at ten o'clock Kate remitted her labor and sought for him in some one of the liquor stores in the neighborhood. As soon as she came in, he always rose up, if not asleep, and went home with her without uttering a word. If asleep she would rouse him, and then he would accompany her.

The history of one day is the history of every day that was spent by Kate and her father. But her health was fast failing her, and she felt that she could not bear up much longer. This troubled her only on her father's account. For his sake she wished to live, and only as long as he lived. Beyond that she had nothing to desire.

It was about a month from this time that, on glancing over a part of a newspaper, which had been wrapped around some articles bought at a neighboring grocery, her eye rested upon an article which gave a glowing account of a wonderful reformation then going on in the city—a reformation among drunkards. It stated that hundreds of men, who had been for a long series of years addicted to drinking, had joined themselves to a society, entitled "The Washington Temperance Society," and had become sober men, and that large numbers were joining the society every week. It spoke of this movement, as well it might, as a most wonderful one—embracing old and young, and those of the most confirmed habits.

"O, if *he* would only join!"—she murmured involuntarily, and a faint hope, the first that had warmed her heart for years, trembled in her bosom.

The paper containing the article was carefully preserved, and placed in his way, time after time, but he had lost all inclination for reading, and poor Kate's feeble hope sank at last, and expired in her bosom, as she saw him take the precious document and tear it in two, preparatory to the operation of shaving himself.

It was early in the month of February, some three weeks after

this, that Kate found her now feeble health rapidly giving way. The pain in her side had become so intense, and the debility of her system so great, that she could not sit over her work more than an hour or so at a time. The consequence was, that her earnings were reduced to about a dollar and a half a week; and did not suffice to procure even the necessary food, much less to provide wood, and pay the rent, &c.

In a most sad and gloomy state of mind, she sat one night about this time, hovering over the last few embers, made by her last stick of wood. Every cent of her money was gone; and there was, in the house, but a single loaf of bread. The night was exceedingly cold, and she had become by nine o'clock, chilled through and through. Her father was out as usual, and she now arose, put on her bonnet, and drew her old thin shawl around her. She shuddered as she opened the door, and felt the keen searching blast without; but there was no avoiding—she could only brave it. She first turned her steps to the drinking house in Park near Liberty Street.

"Is my father here?" she asked, on glancing around and not seeing him.

"No," was the surly answer.

"Has he been here to-night?"

"No."

And she turned away with a feeling of disappointment. She next sought him in another grog-shop, near Lexington Street.

"Crazy Kate again!" ejaculated the bar-keeper, in a half sneering, half familiar tone, as she entered.

"Is my father here?" she asked, with a face and tone of anxiety, seeming not to heed the remark.

"Come in, dear, and we will see. Has old Hamilton been here to-night?" he continued, speaking to a boy who sat nodding on a chair, at the same time that he lifted him by one arm and pushed him half across the room.

"I d'no—" replied the lad, rubbing his eyes, and glancing at the bar-keeper with a look of indignation.

"Go off up stairs and see if he is not asleep in one of the boxes!"

Then turning to the old man's daughter, he said, as he passed to her side and laid his hand impudently upon her shoulder—

"Well, Kate, how are you, dear?"

Poor Kate felt the blood mounting to her face, as she moved away from him. But she did not reply. All that she could say she felt would only subject her to more rudeness and outrage.

"Shy as a deer! Ha! ha! But come, Kate, try and smile a little—or pout if you will; but do'nt put on such an air of offended dignity. I ca n't bear it—ha! ha!"

"Stick up to her, Bill! She's only playing a little shy—" cried one of the loungers in the bar-room, rising to his feet, and coming forward.

"Be kind enough to say if my father is here," the poor distressed creature now said, appealingly. "If he is not, tell me, that I may go and seek him elsewhere."

"Wait a minute. Tom has n't had time to find him yet."

"Stick up to her, Bill! Ha! ha! You 're afraid."

Thus bantered the bar-keeper again approached Kate. Touching her familiarly under the chin, while she shrunk still further from him, he said,

"Don't be afraid, my pretty duck."

"Kiss her, Bill! Kiss her! You're afraid to do that."

"No I aint."

"Yes you are."

"See if I am."

And the bar-keeper again went towards the frightened girl.

"O sir," she said, "if you are a man, spare me these insults. If you have a mother or a sister, think of them, and for their sakes do not thus outrage a poor almost heart-broken creature. Tell me whether my father be here or not. It is late, and he is very old. If he is not here, he may be perishing in the street. Let me go then quickly."

"Kiss her!" ejaculated one of the company.

"Yes, kiss her, Bill!" cried another.

And the mean-spirited wretch again moved towards her.

"For shame!" said a voice at the moment. "For shame! Let her go!" And a man who had not heretofore spoken, arose from a chair and joined the group that had now surrounded Kate.

"Your father is not here, Miss Hamilton, and has not been here, I believe, to-night," he said, in a tone of kindness and consideration.

The company looked surprised and indignant at this interfer-

ence, and as each one of the group turned towards the individual who had last spoken, Kate glided from the room.

"I should like to know what business you have to interfere in this matter," the bar-keeper said with a frown.

"Because I never will stand by and see a decent woman insulted. I've got a sister; and if any man were to talk to her as some of you talked to Kate Hamilton to-night, I would pull his tongue out of his head." The face of the speaker flushed, and his tones were angry.

"Mighty fine," ejaculated one of the party, sneeringly. "Tom Dunn 's going to turn pious."

"You may ridicule as much as you please," he replied, "but that don't alter the matter. My mother, while she was living," and his voice slightly trembled, "has looked me up many a time, just as that girl is now looking up her father, and bad as I was, and am, I never did, and never can, feel anything but respect and consideration for that woman, mother, sister, wife, or daughter, who thus consents to enter a place like this in search of a beloved object. Kate Hamilton, let me tell you, is no common girl. Her father was, at one time, among the richest of our merchants, and she then moved in the first circles; and was beloved, I have been told, and admired by all. Think, then, what must be her feelings now, dragged down, as she has been, in clinging to her father, and compelled to enter a place like this, on such an errand as that which brought her here. Think of it, I say, and never again offer her an insult!"

There was something in the tone, manner, and words of the speaker that subdued the feelings of those he addressed, debased as they were, and they did not attempt to reply. The individual who had spoken, observing the effect of his words, turned away and resumed the newspaper and glass of punch that had occupied his attention before Kate Hamilton came in.

Meantime the anxious daughter turned away from the door of the grog-shop, murmuring,

"Where can he be?"

The wind came rushing down the street, and penetrated her thin garments, but she paused only a moment, and then turned up the street, pursuing her way steadily until she turned into Wagon alley. A few doors from the corner stood a liquor store, the vile haunt of characters the most degraded and abandoned.

Several times she had traced her father to this place, and again, with an instinctive reluctance, did she lift the latch, and enter. As she passed up to the counter, she said to the woman who kept the shop, in a low, agitated tone,

"Has Mr. Hamilton been here to-night?"

"No, he has not!" was answered in a loud voice. "And he'd better not venture here again, the old vagabond! See here!" pointing to sundry chalk marks on a board, "there's a score against him of a dollar, and he hasn't showed his face here for a month, the old cheat! And you can just tell him, Miss, that I'll have the constable after him, so I will! The drunken old rascal!"

As the landlady went on, her wrath increased, and her words came thicker and faster. But Kate turned from the counter, and passing from the shop, was soon beyond the sound of the woman's voice.

"Oh, it is dreadful!" she murmured, as she regained the street, and paused a few moments to collect her scattered thoughts. Then she went on again, pursuing her search from shop to shop, and from cellar to cellar, until she had been to every drinking house and cellar in the whole neighborhood. But he was in none of them; and all put her off with the short reply, that they "didn't know any thing about him," and some added, "nor didn't care either."

With a troubled heart she returned home, the feeble hope in her mind that he might be there. But that idea was speedily dispelled. All was as still and as desolate there as when she had gone out. Here she lingered but for a few moments, every fear becoming aroused for the safety of her parent. He was old and feeble, and now she remembered, or thought she remembered, something unusual in his manner at supper-time. Again she went out, but where to look for him, or where to direct her steps, she knew not. For more than half an hour she walked around and around the squares, in the vain hope of meeting him, and even ventured a second time into some of his accustomed haunts, only to receive a cruel rebuff.

Almost distracted in mind she was crossing Market street, on her way home again, when she saw him turn into Little Sharp street. Quick as thought she darted forward and drew up to the old man's side.

"O father!" she said, in a low, anxious, trembling tone; "Where have you been? I have searched after you for more than an hour."

"You have found me now, Kate," was his only reply, but the tone was different, and there was more of real affection in it than had greeted her ear for a long, long time.

"Are you not very cold?" she asked, as he leaned upon her arm.

"No, Kate," he said, tenderly, "I am not very cold. But if you have been out for an hour this bitter night you must be chilled to the heart."

In a few moments they gained their cheerless home, and as the door closed upon them, the old man took both of the hands of his child in his own, and while the tears started from his eyes, said—

"Kate, my dear, good girl, I have cheering news to tell you. I have signed the pledge of the Washingtonians to-night."

"O father!" the almost heart-broken creature exclaimed, looking up into his face with a glance of unutterable love, while a light seemed almost to shine through her countenance. "Can it indeed be true!"

"It is true, my child. I am sober now; and have done it in a sober mood. And I will abide by it if I die! And now Kate, can I, ought I, dare I, ask your forgiveness for the heart-breaking misery that I have brought upon you, while I bless you for the undeviating affection that has ever caused you to cling to a degraded and justly despised old man."

"Do not talk so, father!" Kate said, looking up into his face imploringly, as she laid her cheek upon his bosom. "This moment compensates for all. O, we shall yet be happy!" and then the first warm gush of tears relieved a heart that was almost breaking for joy.

The promise of that blessed hour has not yet been mocked. More that a year has passed, and Mr. Hamilton is still a sober man, and old as he is, one among the most active in the cause of temperance.

It is remarkable how quickly the external condition changes after a man becomes temperate. Instead of turning a wheel, Mr. Hamilton has, by the aid of his temperance friends, obtained an easy situation in which he is usefully employed. It yields him the comfortable income of five hundred dollars a year. With the

frugal habits of his daughter, who has learned economy in the severest school, it more than suffices to provide for all their wants. Their small dwelling in a pleasant neighborhood, presents an air of neatness and comfort that is truly delightful, in contrast with their household economy little over a year since. Kate's health is gradually improving, and her countenance, though sedate, wears a cheerful expression.

May no dark shadow ever again fall upon her heart. And confident are we, that it will not. The present wonderful movement is not the mere work of man, nor altogether under the control of men. Its cause lies deeply hidden in that invisible world of causes, whose mysterious action upon this visible world of effects, is often so incomprehensible. The era of intemperance, as a national curse, is past. Whatever of evil uses in society it has had to perform, we are bold to believe are accomplished, and, like the plague that once desolated London, will ere long live only on the page of history a fearful wonder—an appalling mystery.

THE EXPERIENCE MEETING.

A FEW weeks after my first visit to the Washingtonians, I again attended one of their meetings. Even in that brief period their influence had become more largely extended. Hundreds had signed the total abstinence pledge, and coming in among them greatly increased their strength and importance. The eyes of the whole community were fixed upon them, with an expression of strange surprise and wonder. They were in the thoughts of all, and their doings were upon every tongue. If you met a friend in the street, the first words, after the greetings had passed, would almost certainly be—

"Have you been to any of these temperance meetings?" Or—

"These are wonderful doings really, of our temperance men." Or—

"Would you believe it? Mr. —— has joined the teetotallers!"

As might well be supposed, the tavern-keepers were greatly alarmed, and used the weapons of ridicule, and sometimes of oppression to counteract the movement. But their efforts were altogether vain. Every opposition but gave renewed power to the impulse.

How many a poor wife ejaculated, with freshly kindling hopes, "O that my husband would join!"

And, perhaps the next man to sign the pledge would be he for whom the ardent wish was breathed. Into many an abode over which for years had hung thick clouds, the warm sunshine suddenly penetrated. Smiles lit up many an eye, too familiar with tears, and joy trembled in many a heart long the dwelling place of sad despondency.

On the night of my second visit to the society, I found the large hall in which their meetings were held crowded to excess.

As before, the interest I felt prompted me to push my way up as near to the speaker's stand as possible, and my position there enabled me to look almost the entire audience in the face. Really it was a sight that moved my feelings, in spite of myself! There sat an old man, whom I had seen staggering in the street, many and many a time—an old man with sons and daughters, and grandchildren, moving in respectable stations. How many tears had been shed for that old man; vain, hopeless tears! How like an almost insupportable weight had his name and image rested upon the hearts of his children! Now his face was calm, and full of hope and confidence. Though marks of the destroyer were still upon him, there was yet a moral dignity in the expression of his countenance which I could not have believed that it would ever have worn.

Near by was another, scarcely past the prime of life, whom I had known for ten years as a common drunkard. To have met him on a race course, gambling at a faro table, or brawling at the polls on an election day, or talking politics in a grog-shop, I should not have been surprised; but here, in a temperance meeting, he seemed, at first glance, to be out of his place. But the more narrowly I observed him, the more palpably apparent was the change that had taken place. He, too, whom all had considered past the hope of reformation, had renounced the cup of confusion!

"Really this is wonderful!" I said. "Surely I must be in a dream!"

But no; it was a blessed reality!

"There is Mr. ——, as I live!" whispered a person sitting near me.

I turned towards the door with renewed surprise, and there, sure enough, came steadily up the aisle an individual, well known as not only a drinking man, but a very bad man. His wife, an amiable woman, and three sweet children, had been for years utterly neglected; and this fact was notorious. And his conduct in other respects was too vile to admit of record here. His step was firm, and there was an expression of sad determination in his face, as he came up towards the head of the room, and sought a place amid the crowd.

"And young M—— also!" the same person said, surprise and pleasure in his tone.

Young M—— was there, sure enough. He was a young man, scarcely twenty-five, who had only been married two years, and in that time had been repeatedly intoxicated, and from neglect and abuse had well nigh broken the heart of his young wife, who had been compelled to leave him and seek refuge in her father's house. I looked him steadily in the face for a few moments,—it was calm and serious.

"There is yet hope, young wife and mother!" I murmured with a thrill of emotion as I gazed upon M——: "there are yet bright days in store for you!"

Subsequent events have proved the truth of that impression.

More than twenty others did I notice there, whom I had known for years, as moral plague spots on the community. How changed they seemed!

After the preliminaries of the meeting were over, the President announced that an hour or so would be spent in the recital of their experiences by such members of the society as felt inclined to speak. The first who arose, was a middle-aged man, with a thoughtful, intelligent countenance. As he straightened himself up, all eyes were turned towards him, and there was a breathless interest manifested throughout the room.

THE RECLAIMED.

"Mr. President,"—he began, in a clear, distinct and emphatic tone,—"A man said to me, yesterday, that, for his part, he would be ashamed to tell of his miserable misconduct, if he had been a drunkard. Now, for my part, I am deeply grieved at and heartily ashamed of the life I have led for the past ten years —that grief and that shame I know to be sincere, and I wish them to be permanent, and one use in telling my history to others, is to confirm these feelings in myself, and another use is to encourage others to lift themselves out of the pit from which I have been elevated. I will not, therefore, keep silence—it seems to me, that if I were to do so, the very stones would cry out against me.

"Twelve years ago, Mr. President, I married a young woman, to whom I was deeply attached—(here the voice of the speaker trembled, and fell to a lower tone.) How purely, and fondly she loved one so unworthy of that love as myself, her unwavering devotion, her patient suffering, her uncomplaining endurance through many weary years, too abundantly testified! Ah, sir! it is a sad thing for a woman to be a drunkard's wife! (And the speaker dashed aside, hastily, a tear.)

"I am a mechanic. When I married, I was in business for myself, and doing very well. I furnished my house comfortably, and provided everything that persons in our circumstances could properly desire. And we were happy—at least so far as such a condition of affairs, united with a true regard for each other, could make us happy.

"I had not been to a place of worship for many years before our marriage, and had a strong disinclination to going. My wife was a religious woman, and at first I went to church with her, but so irksome did the task become, that I made first one excuse

for staying at home, and then another, and finally declined going altogether.

This I could see pained her exceedingly, more especially as I generally met some friends in a neighboring tavern, and either sat and talked politics in the bar-room, or strolled out to some drinking gardens in the suburbs of the city. But I thought it very foolish in her to be thus pained, and, indeed, her evident disquietude of mind at my conduct, irritated me, in spite of my better judgment and feelings, especially after I had been drinking, and caused me to think unkindly of her. It is very hard for us to cherish unkind thoughts, without their some time or other showing themselves in unkind words. I remember, as distinctly as I remember any occurrence of my life, the first time I spoke a harsh word to Mary. It was about a year after our marriage. She had been to church, the first time in many weeks, and I had been at the tavern as usual, and had drank rather freely. When I came in, I found her sitting with her babe, only a few weeks old, on her lap. The dinner table was on the floor, and Mary had evidently been waiting for me for some time. She looked up, her face still pale from her recent sickness, and said, half smiling, half in earnest—

"'Oh, James, how can you spend your time on Sundays, as you do?'

"My wife, as I have just said, had been to church for the first time in many weeks. She was religious in her feelings, and conscientious in the discharge of all her duties, and besides, felt deeply concerned for me. Absence from worship for many weeks had caused the services of the church to make a stronger impression on her mind than usual, and the natural consequence was, that she felt a more anxious concern for me, which prompted her to speak as she did. But I was not in a condition to appreciate fully her feelings. Had I not been drinking, I should have felt little, if at all annoyed at her gentle reproof. But blinded and excited by liquor, I became instantly aroused into anger, and replied sharply:

"'Mary, I won't submit to be catechised by you; and so, let this be the last time that you interfere in what does not concern you! If you relish going to church, go—I shall not hinder you—but don't, as you value your peace of mind, attempt again to dictate to me!'

"As I said, I felt angry with Mary, and spoke sharply. Poor creature! I shall never forget how pale and frightened she looked; nor how long after the shadow that then fell upon her countenance rested on her gentle face. Indeed, from that hour, I believe she was never again happy. She had suddenly awakened from a delusive dream, to a perception of painful realities; and the impression then made, time could not efface from her memory. I was instantly conscious of the wrong I had done, but alas! had not the manliness to confess it. My pride, the weak, stubborn pride of a man under the influence of liquor, was offended, and shrunk from any thing like an acknowledgment. The dinner hour passed in oppressive, embarrassed silence. After it was over, instead of spending the afternoon with my wife, as I had heretofore done, I took my hat and went out. Of course, I joined my cronies at the tavern, where I passed several hours in drinking and talking politics.

"I came home towards nightfall, more under the influence of liquor than I had been since our marriage. The first glance at Mary's face, told too plainly that the arrow had entered her soul. This indication, instead of softening my feelings, naturally kind, irritated and angered me.

"'It's all put on,' I said to myself, indignantly. 'But she needn't think to play off such tricks upon me!"

"As I seated myself near the window, moody and reserved, I was conscious that her eyes were upon me, but I avoided meeting their earnest glances. I felt, in spite of my effort to throw her into the wrong, that her heart was yearning towards me. But such a consciousness did not soften me in the least. I was, in a degree, insane from the influence of the liquor I had taken—insane, as every man is, who indulges in strong drink—and saw all things through a false and perverted medium. O, it is dreadful how men will give up the pure, generous freedom of calm and rational thought for a gratification so low and sensual, and become slaves to evil thoughts and evil affections! As I glance through a period of some ten years, occupying the position that I now do, and seeing things in such clear light, I can scarcely believe that I am the same being that I was. I seem like a man who has been partially deranged for a long series of years, while his memory has remained active. What I once was, and what I now am, a man of kind feelings to all, I see to be my real character; but that

dreadful period between, during which every good point in my nature was changed to an opposite, was the period of my insanity. O, sir, it is indeed dreadful to think of that wild and strange delusion! But to proceed:

"That moody silence, the silence as of the grave to Mary's gentlest affections, continued even while we sat at the tea-table. Once or twice she made a remark, but I did not reply. I was possessed of an evil spirit, and, conscious all the while of the wrong I had done, cherished a feeling of blame against her. After supper, I repaired again to the tavern, and drank to a state of partial intoxication. When I came home, about ten o'clock, Mary had gone to bed with her babe. I felt glad of this, for, but half conscious as I was, I was yet willing to avoid that distressed, appealing look, which had, in the evening, irritated instead of softening me. She seemed to be asleep as I entered the chamber, and perceiving this, I undressed myself very silently, and half intoxicated as I was, had sense enough remaining to get quietly into bed. I was soon lost to consciousness in profound slumber.

"It was daylight when I awoke, and Mary lay by my side as hushed as a sleeping infant. But I felt that she was not asleep—her breathing was too still. O, how wretched I felt! How painfully conscious of the deep wrong I had done! I would have given worlds, it seemed, if I had possessed them, could the events of the previous day have been utterly obliterated from the memory of both Mary and myself. But this was impossible. The arrow had sped, and the wound been made, and, even if healed, a scar, I felt, would ever remain.

"From these painful feelings, my mind naturally turned to thoughts of reconciliation. And I pondered long over what I should do, and what I should say, to restore the light and smile to Mary's face. But alas! some evil spirit was near to suggest thoughts of pride. It seemed as if it would be too humiliating for me, a man, to make confession of wrong to a woman. The moment this idea was presented, I turned myself away from the half formed resolution to tell my fault openly, and thus relieve the heart upon which I had laid so heavy a burden.

"Then I got up and dressed myself, without uttering a word, and went down stairs. It was about half an hour after that Mary entered our little breakfast room where I was sitting. I lifted

my eyes as she came in, and she looked me in the face, with a calm, sad expression, that touched my heart. Then the impulse came upon me strong, to spring to her side, and folding her in my arms, confess the wrong I had done her—for I loved her tenderly. But I seemed held back by a powerful hand; and then pride came with its mean suggestions. Few and brief were the words that passed between us at the morning meal. When I left the house for my shop, I proceeded, as was my custom, to a neighboring tavern, and drank a glass of brandy and water. Then I repaired to my business, still thinking of Mary, but less kindly. It occurred to me, during the morning, that she was only putting on a show of great distress of mind, merely to punish me. I felt irritated at the thought. Another glass of liquor confirmed more and more this impression, until I began, really, to believe it true.

"So much did this false idea irritate me, that it was with difficulty that I could restrain myself from rebuking her angrily, at dinner time, and more especially in the evening. Gradually, however, this little breach, instead of widening by another opening rupture, grew less and less. But, the unclouded sunshine of Mary's face never returned. Still, she was cheerful, and seemed to have forgotten the circumstance—but not cheerful as she once had been. No one can tell how deeply this change pained me at times; especially, as, from the fact that she never afterwards expressed surprise or disappointment at any act or omission of mine, it was evident that an impression had been made that time could not efface.

"But she was ever even-tempered, mild, gentle, and affectionate. And though, through a long series of years, I neglected her, and debased myself, she never uttered a reproach, or neglected a duty. If I blamed her, or spoke in my drunken moments, unkind and cutting words, she did not reply. But, I am going ahead of my story.

"From drinking two or three glasses a day, my appetite for liquor increased, and soon demanded double that number. Still, I thought not of danger, until I was carried home from the tavern, one night, in a state of drunken insensibility. When I awoke in the morning, I endeavored to recall the events of the preceding evening, but could recollect nothing beyond my sitting and drinking in the tavern. One glance at the face of my wife, confirmed the sudden thought that I had been drunk. How pale

"'IF YOU DON'T HUSH THIS MOMENT I WILL HALF KILL YOU!' I EXCLAIMED, ADVANCING TOWARDS THE LITTLE GIRL I LOVED SO TENDERLY WHEN SOBER, AND CAUGHT HER UP MADLY BY ONE ARM, AND COMMENCED BEATING HER WITH ALL MY STRENGTH," ETC.—*Page 73.*

and distressed was the expression of that face, yet how full of anxious yearning affection, as she turned her eyes upon me!

"I asked her no questions, and she made no allusion to the condition I had been in. But I resolved to drink less.

"How feeble is such a resolution, when tempted by a single draught of liquor! Instead of six or eight glasses, I only drank four during that day; but on the next I drank nine, and when I came home at night, could just make out to find my way to bed. For two weeks from that evening I did not draw a sober breath! One night about the end of that period, I came home in a feverish state of mind. My nerves had become excited to a high degree from their long continued, excessive stimulation. I felt wild, restless and irritable. It was three years after our marriage, and our only child, a little girl, was about two years of age. She was not well, and, in consequence, was very fretful. Her crying annoyed me exceedingly.

"'Hush!' I said in an angry tone to her, a few minutes after I came in. But she cried on.

"'Aint you going to hush?' I said louder and more angrily. Still her crying did not cease. I now felt very much excited, and my whole body seemed to burn with anger against her.

"'If you don't hush this moment I will half kill you!' I exclaimed, advancing towards the little girl I loved so tenderly when sober, but against whom I now felt a bitter indignation. But little Mary did not hush. Then I caught her up madly by one arm, and commenced beating her with all my strength—the strength of a nervous man inspired by intoxication and anger, exercised on a delicate child but two years old! One blow, such as I gave her, were enough, it would seem, to have killed her. The poor child ceased crying on the instant; but I was in a rage and ceased not my blows until the mother, terrified at the scene, sprung forward, and snatched the little creature from my hand that held her high above the floor. To this I responded with a powerful blow on the side of my poor wife's head, and she fell senseless to the floor, and at the same moment, I kicked my child, who was clinging to her mother's garments, half across the room.

"For a moment after, I seemed in the centre of a whirling and confused mass—then I became suddenly sober, and as perfectly conscious and rational as ever I was in my life. O, the agony of that terrible moment! I shudder and grow sick at

heart, even now, when I think of it. There lay both wife and child, pale and insensible, and for all I knew dead, before me; and my hand had done the deed! My wife and child that I loved so tenderly! My gentle, uncomplaining wife, and sweet innocent child!

"But I cannot dwell longer here; I must pass on, or I shall not be able to finish my narrative—(and the voice of the speaker trembled, and his tones were husky.) From that hour, my wife never smiled; and my little one seemed to me to have a sad expression in her dear young face: and I doubt not that the appearance was real. These changes always irritated me when I had been indulging to any considerable extent in drinking, and caused me to speak many an angry word to both. O sir!—well may strong drink be called a *devil*, for when it has once entered into us, we are possessed as of an evil spirit. For about a week after I had struck that blow, I was a sober man; but my reflections, while sober, were too terrible, and at last, to drown these, I drank to intoxication.

"Under circumstances like these, my business could not, of course, long remain prosperous. It gradually became involved, and the consequent perplexity caused me to drink still deeper. Six years from the day that I was married, I was sold out by the sheriff, and with two children and my wife, turned out upon the world without a dollar in my pocket. This, instead of sobering, only caused me to drink the harder.

"From a master workman in a large business, I sunk to the condition of a journeyman; and from a commodious house, neatly furnished, my family retired to two small rooms, with but a few necessary household articles. I cannot tell you how this change really affected my poor wife, for I was too ill-natured to feel for and sympathize with her, and too much and too constantly bewildered by intoxication, to be able to make any correct observations on her appearance. But, that her sufferings must have been intense—beyond the power of human language to describe—may be inferred from the fact, that in one year she sunk into her grave. Not from any sudden illness—not from that slow, but sure destroyer consumption—but, from the agonies of a wounded spirit, gradually wearing away the vital energies of her system. Ah! sir — How many a woman has sunk thus, into an early grave, during the last twenty years.

"When she was borne away from the comfortless tenement in which we lived, I was, would you believe it, sir, too drunk to attend her funeral! Three days after, I got one of our orphan asylums to take my two children; both girls, one six years of age, and the other four. I was then free to sink as low as I pleased, without the dread of encountering a pale, sad, suffering face, or meeting daily with two neglected children, to reprove me. I was freed, also, from the necessity of providing for them, and this left me a larger sum to spend for liquor, or, rather relieved me from the necessity of working so many hours in the day. Gradually I sunk lower and lower, until I became really unfit to work at my trade, and then no one would employ me. This was two years after the death of my wife, and during this time, I had not once seen my children, nor did I care to see them. All natural affection seemed gone from my bosom. I loved only myself, and sought only the lowest sensual gratifications. How like a picture drawn by a sickly imagination does all this appear! It does not seem possible that a human being can become so utterly degraded. But alas! it is too true. Thousands of heart-broken wives, neglected children, and debased drunkards, covering by thousands the length and breadth of this land, attest the awful truth. I say awful—for it is awful to contemplate the wide-spread ruin of soul and body, that has been caused among the people of this country by drunkenness.

"Unable to get work at my trade, I resorted to any expedient that presented itself to earn a penny with which to buy liquor; for liquor I would have. Sometimes I broke stone on the turnpikes near the city; sometimes I scraped the streets as a common scavenger. But I usually soon lost even such employment from drunkenness; I was too worthless for even that! Then I would seek little jobs about—such as piling wood, holding horses, or carrying home market baskets. As for lodgings — Howard's woods, or some lumber yard sufficed during the summer months; and in winter, I was an almost nightly tenant of the watchhouse. Thus I continued, sinking lower and lower, if it were possible to descend lower than the point I had reached, for three or four years.

"It was in the month of June last—on a warm, sultry evening, that I repaired, about nine o'clock, to Howard's woods, there to pass the night. Although the night was clear, there was no

moon, and it was quite dark in the woods. I entered from the Falls road, and pursued my way up to the fence that encloses the garden of the old Howard mansion. I made out to climb over this, and then lay down just within it, and was soon sleeping as soundly as if I had been reposing on the softest bed.

"I suppose that I must have been sleeping about two hours, perhaps three, when I seemed to be suddenly awakened by some one laying a hand upon my shoulder, and calling my name aloud. Instantly, I was surrounded by a light, which appeared to emanate from three figures, all in white, that stood before me. One glance was sufficient to tell me who they were. I could not mistake the face of Mary, nor the forms of my two children. But how changed they were. Each was dressed in garments white and shining, and upon each face reposed a peaceful smile. Instantly, however, as their eyes rested upon me, when it seemed they became suddenly conscious of my presence, did that quiet, happy smile pass away, and a sad expression rested upon each lovely countenance. Then they fixed their eyes upon me reprovingly, and slowly faded from my sight. All around was now thick darkness.

"My next perception was that of the rain falling heavily upon my face, as I lay upon the ground. I was perfectly sobered—more so than I had been for years. For some moments, after rising to my feet, I mused upon the strange apparition I have mentioned, and the more I mused upon it, the more it troubled me. I could not, of course, lie again upon the wet ground. Nor could I find my way out of the wood. Suddenly, however, a broad flash of lightning blazed around, and in the instant that it lighted up the air, I saw the direction it was necessary for me to take, in order to return to the city.

"The storm now began to rage violently. The rain fell in a heavy incessant shower; the lightning was frequent and flashed out with a fierce glare, running it seemed along the ground, now about my feet, and now circling some tree like a blazing serpent. How deep and solemn was the darkness that followed each flash—quickly succeeded by terrific peals of thunder, that jarred the earth upon which I stood as if shook by an earthquake! And the war of the tempest in that old wood was loud and wild.

"As I groped my way along, guided by the frequent glare of the lightning, drenched with the rain, and shrinking at each tre-

mendous crash that broke over my head, my heart sank within me, filled with an awful fear. At last I was clear of the woods, and turned my steps towards the city. As I reached Franklin street, the storm began to subside, and, in the course of half an hour, the sky was cloudless, and the stars shone with a clearer brightness than before. I was standing at the corner of Howard and Lexington streets, irresolute as to which way I should go, when the town clock rang out the hour of two. There were yet two hours before daylight, and I was wet to the skin, shivering with cold, yet raging with a most intolerable thirst for liquor. To abate, in some degree, the latter, I drank ladle full after ladle full of pure cold water from the pump near which I had paused. Then laying down upon a neighboring cellar door, I tried again to sleep. But I was so chilled from the dampness of my clothes, and so much unnerved, that I sought in vain to sink into unconsciousness, until near day-dawn. Then my sleep was brief and troubled, and I was awakened from it by finding myself shaken by a firm hand. I had been awakened thus, a hundred times before, and had ever met rude and irritating language. For this I was again prepared, and rose up with an angry scowl upon my face. But the first words disarmed me.

"'What a dreadful life this must be for a man to lead!' the person who had aroused me said, in a kind, sympathizing tone.

"This melted me right down. For years a kind word had never been spoken to me.

"'O, it is dreadful!' I replied, earnestly, looking up into his face.

"'Then, my friend, why do you lead such a life?' he asked, encouragingly.

"'I wish I could lead a different one, for there is no pleasure in this—' I replied in a desponding tone.

"'You may, if you will,' he said, and he spoke earnestly.

"But I shook my head, and answered—

"'No—no. My case is hopeless. I cannot resist the intense desire for liquor. I must have it.'

"'But you can resist it,' he said—'I know many who were as much enslaved as you are, who are now sober men.'

"'That cannot be,' was my positive, half indignant reply, for I thought he was trifling with me. 'Who has heard of any one so far gone as I am, ever being reformed? No—no!—I shall fill

a drunkard's grave'—and I shook my head in the bitterness of despair.

"'I have heard—I have seen very many who were as little likely to be reclaimed as you are, who are now sober, industrious men, with their families again around them, and again happy. This is a new era, my friend, a new power is at work; and what was once considered hopeless, is now an every day occurrence. Hundreds of men, who have been in the constant habit of drinking, have renounced liquor altogether, and are now banded together for mutual assistance. Come! Will you not join in with them?'

"Thus the stranger urged me, and I listened as if in a dream. After he had ceased, I said eagerly, as I rose to my feet:

"'O sir, do not trifle with me! Is what you say, indeed true? Can a drunken wretch, debased as I am, be reclaimed?'

"'He can, my friend!' was the emphatic answer. 'For ten years *I* was a drunkard. It is now six months since I tasted liquor, and I have no desire for it.'

"How strange all this sounded to me! And as he spoke a new hope sprung up in my bosom. But this hope quickly faded, and I said in a sad tone:

"'Others may reform, but I cannot. If I were to quit drinking what could I do? I have no home, no friends, no clothes that are even decent—all men would continue to shun me as a loathsome wretch, who had lost all claims to human consideration.'

"'Do you really wish to reform?' the stranger now asked me in a decided, serious voice.

"'I do most sincerely.'

"'Then you *can* reform. Come with me,' he added, taking hold my arm. 'Wherever there is a will, there is a way.'

"I followed him mechanically. We soon came to a small two story house in a narrow street or alley, running down south from the Lexington market. Into this we entered, when I was taken up into one of the chambers. Here I was supplied with plenty of clean water, a clean, coarse shirt, and a pair of coarse linen pantaloons. As the latter were produced, the man said to me:

"'Are you willing to sign a pledge never again to drink any kind of intoxicating liquor? In a word—will you join the temperance society?'

"'Will it be of any use?' I asked.

"'Yes, if you wish to reform,' he replied.

"'Then I will join, and try my best,' I said.

"'Do so, and you are safe,' was the cheerful and encouraging answer.

"After I had washed myself, and put on the clean, dry clothes with which I had been furnished, I went down stairs. There I was invited to partake, with the family, of a warm, plentiful breakfast. The man had a wife and three children, and each seemed cheerful, and even happy. To me, they were all kindness and attention. After breakfast, I was invited to go up stairs and lie down, until my coat, which had been drenched with rain, could be dried. This offer I accepted, for, now that I had taken no liquor since the day before, I felt quite weak. I soon fell asleep, and was conscious of nothing further, until my unknown friend came up and asked me to take some dinner with the family. Now I was in a calmer, and more rational frame of mind than I had been in for years, and as I descended with him, and met his cheerful family at the table, I thought of my own children, sheltered in a charitable institution, and of my poor wife, long since laid in the peaceful grave. It was a bitter reflection.

"At the dinner table, the conversation turned upon the wonderful reformation that was going on among the drunkards—a reformation, the most distant whisper of which had never, before that morning, reached my ears. My unknown friend spoke of his own history; of how he had been enslaved to the love of strong drink—how he had neglected his business and abused his family—how he had despaired of ever becoming reformed; and how, at last, he had been sought out by some of the Washingtonians, and persuaded to sign the total abstinence pledge. The result of this pledge, he pointed out in the changed and happy condition of his family.

"'I was found by a Washingtonian,' said he, 'sleeping one morning on a cellar-door, as I found you; and I was persuaded by him to go and sign the pledge. His kindness and evident concern moved me, and I resolved that I would take his advice. And I did so. That night I went to one of their meetings and signed the pledge. Since then, every thing has gone well with me. And now, I get up early every morning, and look out for the drunkards on the cellar-doors, and in the market houses. I

have already induced nineteen, whom I found thus, to sign the pledge; and if you go with me to-night to the meeting, as you have promised, you will make the twentieth.'

"I went, of course, and signed. After I had put my name down, I felt a new power within me. I felt that I could keep the pledge. And I *have* kept it, and mean to keep it as long as I live.

"'You must go home with me to-night,' said this kind individual, touching me on the shoulder after the meeting was over —'and to-morrow we will see if we can get you something to do.'

"I accepted his kind offer, gladly, and slept, for the first time in three years, on a comfortable bed. On the next day, sure enough, he went with me to three or four places where my business was carried on, and at last, obtained work for me. From that time I have had as much as I can do, and am now earning twelve dollars every week.

"Soon after I was reformed, I went to see my children. I had not looked upon them for five long years. How changed they were! When I told them that I was their father, they seemed scarcely to credit it, and evinced no affection for me. This touched my heart. I staid but a few minutes the first time, for the interview was too painful to me, and, I saw, too embarrassing to them, to admit of being prolonged.

"In a week I called again, and then the distance and reserve of my children were in some degree broken down. Another week passed, and I paid them another visit—a smile lit up each face as I entered. O sir, words cannot express my delight, as I saw that smile! It was a ray of sunshine to my heart. Thus I continued to visit them regularly, until I could not let a day pass without looking upon their faces, and listening to their sweet voices. And they even greeted my coming with expressions of gladness.

"I now made application to the directors of the institution to have my children restored to me; but was positively refused. I represented that I was reformed—that I was earning ten and twelve dollars a week, and had already money enough to buy the few articles of furniture that we should want. But they would not trust me with my children. How wretched I felt, as I turned away from those to whom my earnest petition had been

addressed! But I determined never to rest until I could get my children. Every three or four weeks I renewed my petition, and every time the reluctance of the directors seemed in some degree to yield. Finally I prevailed, and this day, thank Heaven!—I received my children back again!"

Here the speaker's voice gave way, and he sat down and sobbed like a child.

There was a deep silence for nearly a minute after he had taken his seat, a silence of profound emotion. Every heart was moved, and almost every eye was wet. Then a man arose, whose appearance indicated that he was yet quite young. He dashed aside a tear as he took the floor; but it was soon evident that a light heart still beat in his bosom.

THE MAN WITH THE POKER.

"I CAN'T tell you, Mr. President," he said, "so sad and moving a tale, as my friend who has just taken his seat, and, Heaven knows, I do n't wish to. I am now only twenty-six years of age—a young man you will say to be a reformed drunkard. That is true; and yet I have been a great drinker in my time. I began when a boy. My master, a book-binder, did n't care anything about me, further than to see that my work was done. Of course I sought my own company, and my own pleasures. The amusement of running to fires pleased me most. Every night I went to the engine house, and there learned to drink. Long before I was twenty-one years of age, I could take a dozen glasses through the day, and scarcely feel it.

"At last I was free. That long looked for time finally came, and I was constituted my own master. But I was little fit to govern myself. As an apprentice, I had to attend to my work, for a certain number of hours every day. But when I became free, this necessity was removed, and inclination led me away to the tavern or engine house, nearly half of my time. Of course, under such circumstances, my wages would not pay my expenses, and I gradually went behindhand. Then came annoying duns, and still more troublesome warrants. To keep from going to jail, I persuaded first this friend and then that one to supersede for me; and the result was, of course, that they were compelled to pay my debts. I felt this keenly, but not keenly enough to make me give up the cause and attend to my work. The thirst for liquor soon became so strong, that it took every dollar I earned to satisfy it. Nothing less than ten to fifteen drinks a day would do me, and my wages were rarely over five dollars a week.

"In this way I got behind with my board, and had to leave my boarding-house. And it was not long before I was turned out of the next one for the same cause. My clothes had now be-

come so dirty and ragged that no boarding-house keeper would receive me, and then I was compelled to go and sleep in the engine house, with two or three others as degraded and wretched as myself.

"One morning, about a year after I had become thus an outcast, I had very strange feelings. My mind was confused, and my hands trembled so that I was unable to use my tools, with anything like the required skill. I could not tell what was the matter with me—but thought that I at least knew what to do. And so I left the shop and went over to a tavern and drank three glasses of brandy and water. But I felt no better. My hands trembled none the less, and my mind was none the clearer. In an hour after, I repeated the dose, but with no better success. I felt seriously alarmed, for my sensations were altogether new and peculiar. It was, I think, about an hour after I had returned from the tavern, that, in reaching out my hand for a small iron bar, it suddenly assumed the form of a serpent, while I was seized with the most horrible fear that the mind can imagine. I shrunk away from the bench at which I was standing, trembling from head to foot, my face, as I have since been told, pale, and expressive of the most abject fear. There was only a boy, a stout lad, in the shop when this occurred, and he started for the door in alarm. Instinctively I turned to follow; but the standing-press was near the door, and as I went towards it, the large iron bar that stood leaning against the wall, began suddenly to writhe, and then, as a huge serpent, seemed to dart towards me. I sprung back with a scream of terror, and fell upon the floor. Here I lay for some time, unable from the paralyzing influence of the dreadful fear that was upon me, to rise. As I lay thus, I can remember distinctly that I made an effort to reason with myself, on the utter impossibility of two iron bars becoming snakes. This calmed my mind a good deal, so that I was enabled to raise myself up and look about me. There stood the long iron bar, in its usual place against the wall, and the small bar, as I glanced at the bench, was lying beside the screw press, a veritable piece of iron. I drew a long breath, and muttered between my teeth—

"'I am going mad, surely!'

"For some moments I stood thus in the middle of the shop, looking first at one bar and then at another, expecting every mo-

ment to see each start into life, yet, at the same time reasoning with myself on the perfect absurdity of the thing. Finally I ventured up to the bench, and after looking steadily at the small bar as I stood bending over it, ventured at length to touch it, and then to grasp it in my hand. It was a bar still! a cold, heavy iron bar. I lifted it up and examined it from end to end. It was the same bar that I had handled for years.

"Thus reassured, I attempted to resume my work. I placed some books in the press, and lifted the bar to screw them up. But I had taken only a single turn, when the bar dropped from my hand into the shaving tub, as if it had really been the serpent it suddenly appeared to be. O sir, I cannot describe the horror of that dreadful moment!—With my mind active, and my consciousness distinct, to be thus beset by appearances that had none the less terror because I could think of them as unreal—the mere creations of a distempered fancy. But if I was terrified at the serpent, how awful were my feelings when, on glancing upwards, I saw a face of horrible malignancy, just over my head, and a dozen serpents and dragons, and monsters of all shapes, coming, as it seemed, with hellish delight towards me. With a single wild, prolonged scream, I rushed to the door, and tumbled, rather than walked down the stairs. Once in the street, I passed over to the tavern. On entering, I went hastily up to the bar, and called for brandy. As I turned the neck of the bottle towards the tumbler, and the liquor commenced running into it, both decanter and glass seemed instantly changed into a living monster, that I could feel writhing in my hands. I dropped both, and sprung backwards half across the bar-room. They were dashed to pieces on the floor.

"One of my old cronies was sitting close by, and instantly came forward, inquiring in a hurried, anxious tone, what ailed me.

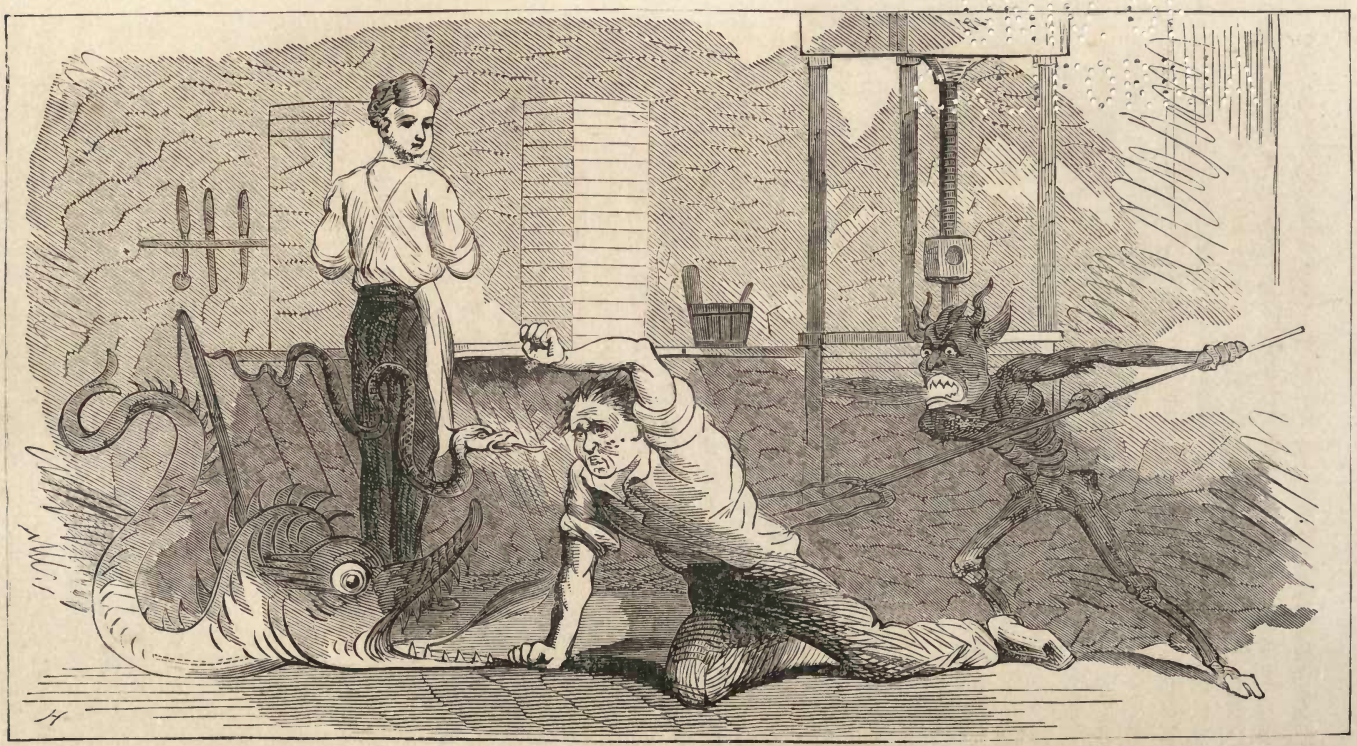
"'I'm going crazy, I believe!'—was my answer attempting to rally myself.

"'But what is the matter, Bill?' he asked, earnestly.

"That's more than I can tell,' I said. 'But everything I touch becomes a serpent or terrible monster.'

"'What's the matter? What's the matter?' eagerly inquired half a dozen others, coming up.

"'Why, *the man with the poker is after him*, I believe!' said



"HOW AWFUL WERE MY FEELINGS WHEN, ON GLANCING UPWARDS, I SAW A FACE OF HORRIBLE MALIGNANCY, AND A DOZEN SERPENTS AND DRAGONS, AND MONSTERS OF ALL SHAPES, COMING, AS IT SEEMED, WITH HELLISH DELIGHT TOWARDS ME," ETC.—*Page* 84.

the person who had first spoken, in a half laughing, half serious tone.

"'Poor fellow!' ejaculated one—

"'Poor fellow, indeed!' said another.

"'What do you mean?' I asked, half indignantly.

"'O nothing, Bill. But you had better go home and go to bed; you are not well.'

"'I know I am not well, Jim,' I said. 'But what is the matter with me? Can you tell me that?'

"And as I asked the question, a horrible, grinning monster started up suddenly before me, and I drew back with an involuntary shriek of terror; and then shrunk into a corner of the room, hiding my face, and trembling from head to foot as violently as if in an ague fit. O, what a horrible fear was that which took possession of me! While I sat thus, shrinking closer into the corner, a glass of pure brandy was placed to my lips, and I drank it all off at a single draught. Still I sat crouching upon the floor, fearing to rise, or look around. At length I turned my head slowly, peering over my shoulder to see if the object of my fear was gone. But instead of one terrible shape, the room seemed filled with serpents and monsters and devils, all grinning at me, as if enjoying my terror with fiendish exultation.

"As I glanced thus around, one of the company came up, and said, in a soothing tone—

"'Don't be afraid, Bill. Nothing shall hurt you.'

"But as he spoke his word of assurance, one of the monstrous shapes peered over his shoulder, and seemed to thrust its head almost into my face. I could not bear this, but starting up, ran out into the street, and took my way I knew not whither. But I will not detain you, to relate all my horrible sufferings for the next two days. Many here have experienced strange terrors, and for those who have not, words are too feeble to express them. Tortured by fears the most terrible—haunted by awful and malignant shapes—and unable to sleep, until, after the lapse of two days and nights, exhausted nature gave way, I endured more, it seemed, than an age of horrors. At length I sunk into a state of insensibility, from which I awoke in the almshouse, whither some friendly hand had conveyed me.

"'What *has* been the matter with me, doctor?' I asked, after I was able to go about.

"'*Mania-â-Potu*,' he replied, in a low, emphatic tone—

"'Mania, what?' I said, for I did not understand him.

"'Mania-â-Potu,' he repeated.

"But I shook my head, for I could not understand him, never having heard of the dreadful disease he named, although I had been a sad sufferer by it.

"He, then, seeing that I was really ignorant of the nature as well as the name of the disease, carefully explained to me, that when, by a long continued resort to artificial stimulus, any one has weakened, to a certain degree, the vital energies of his system, the stimulus itself at last fails to keep up the apparently healthy action, and all things fall into disorder.

"'But why did I see those terrible serpents, and monsters, doctor?' I asked, my heart sinking at the bare recollection.

"That is one of the unaccountable phenomena attending this strange disease,' he replied, gravely. 'For one, you have experienced its horrors, and I hope the effect is such on your mind, as to deter you from running the risk of another attack.'

"'Nothing shall tempt me to touch the accursed thing again!' I said, with the force of a strong determination; and, though often tempted since, I have thus far kept my resolution, and intend keeping it to the end of my life. It was enough for me to have had *the man with the poker* after me once. I have no desire to cultivate his acquaintance further.

"Well, after I was dismissed from the almshouse, I went back to the shop and obtained work again. It was, I think, about ten o'clock, on the morning of my first return to business, that a constable touched me on the shoulder, as I stood at the bench, and said—

"'I have a warrant against you, sir.'

"'Against me?'

"'Yes; you owe Mr. —— ten dollars, and he has ordered a warrant to be taken out against you.'

"It was a grog bill.

"'I can't pay it now,' I replied, 'but tell Mr. —— that, if he will only wait, I will give him two dollars a week until the whole bill is settled.'

"'You must get it superseded,' he said.

"'I can't do it,' I answered. 'Nobody will go my security. Too many have suffered by me already.'

"'Then you will have to go to jail, that 's all.'

"'I can 't help it. I 've got no money, and no one to go my security. So, when the time comes, I must go to jail, I suppose —but staying in jail won't pay debts.'

"I promised to go to the magistrate's office at four o'clock on that afternoon and confess judgment, and, when the hour came, I went accordingly. I, of course, admitted the debt to be a legal one, though I told the landlord, who was present, that as to the justice of it, that was another question, for he had sold me the liquor when I was in a state little better than insanity. This aggravated him, and he ordered an execution and commitment to be made out on the spot. Under these I was carried over to jail, and a dollar and sixty cents paid for one week's boarding. It would detain you too long to relate the cruel torture of mind which I saw exhibited in the debtor's prison. One man I thought, would go crazy. He had been suddenly torn away from his wife and children, who were utterly destitute—the former sick, and the latter young and helpless. He seemed deeply and tenderly attached to them, poor fellow! He walked the long avenue, into which the different apartments opened, backwards and forwards hour after hour, in restless anguish of mind. We roomed together, and it seemed to me that he did not sleep an hour during the week that I was imprisoned. The debt was not originally his own; he had saved a friend from the jail, to be carried there in his stead. He was a sober man, and his friend intemperate. That tells the whole story.

"My creditor got tired of paying my board after the first week, and so I was turned out of jail at its expiration. The poor fellow I have mentioned, came out on the same day.

"I returned to the shop again, and went to work. While I lay idling in jail, I had time for reflection. On counting up my debts, I found that I owed for old boarding bills, old tailors', and shoemakers' bills, grog bills, and for warrants that others had superseded and been compelled to pay for me, just about three hundred dollars. This large sum, I resolved should be paid, if I could only keep out of jail. As to my appetite for liquor, that came back on me strong, but whenever I wanted a dram, I drank about a pint of pure cold water, and if that did not do, I repeated the dose, and so I finally drowned the desire out. It can 't stand up against cold water! One man said to me, shortly after I came out of jail,

"'Come, Bill, take a glass of beer, that can't hurt you!'

"'But I said 'No. If I drink beer I shall want brandy.'

"'Take a little cider,' he then urged.

"'It's but the devil by another name,' was my answer. 'No —no—I will have nothing to do with anything that makes *drunk come!*'

"'But I'm sure a little wine can't hurt you—'

"'You'll never get the *man with the poker* after me again, that's clear,' was my positive reply. 'I have just as much of his acquaintance as I want, so don't talk to me about beer, cider, wine, or brandy. I've done with the whole of them. Hereafter I sing—

'Water for me! bright water for me!
And wine for the tremulous debauchee.'

"I was not to be driven from my resolution. I was a sober, rational man, and I meant to remain so; and what is better, I did remain so, and paid off all my debts within a year into the bargain. And how do you think I did that? Why, I lived for the whole time on half a dollar a week! Every Monday morning I went down to Mason's bake-house, and bought six cents worth of broken navy and pilot bread. This was enough to last me a week, and when softened in water, with a little salt, was, by no means, unpalatable food. As for meat, I ate but little, never buying over a pound in a whole week. I made my coffee in the old glue kettle, and, at night, slept in the shaving tub! In this way I lived for a year; was perfectly healthy, and more contented than I had ever been before. At the end of that time, I was out of debt, and had a new suit of clothes to my back.

"But now, having accomplished the task I had set for myself, I began to have a desire for company. I felt often very lonely, and was frequently troubled with thoughts of the tavern and my old companions. But I hit upon a remedy for this too. And what do you think that was? Why, I got me a wife; and have never been lonesome or tired of myself since!

"He sat down amid shouts of prolonged applause. That man can be anything he pleases, said I to myself. He has only to will that a thing be done, and no matter how high the aim success is certain.

THE DRUNKARD'S BIBLE.

"MR. PRESIDENT," said a short, stout man, with a good-humored countenance, and a florid complexion, rising as the last speaker took his seat, "I have been a tavern-keeper."

At this announcement there was a movement through the whole room, and an expression of increased interest.

"Yes, Mr. President," he went on—"I have been a tavern-keeper, and many a glass have I sold to you, and to the Secretary there, and to dozens of others that I see here,"—(glancing around upon the company.)

"That's a fact," broke in the President—"many a gin-toddy and brandy-punch have I taken at your bar. But times are changed now, and we have begun to carry the war right into the enemy's camp. And our war has not been altogether unsuccessful, for we have taken prisoner one of the rum-sellers' bravest generals! But go on, friend W——, let us have your experience."

"As to my experience, Mr. President," the ex-tavern-keeper resumed, "in rum-selling and rum-drinking, for I have done a good deal of both in my time, that would be rather too long a story to tell to-night—and one that I had much rather forget than relate. It makes me tremble and sick at heart, whenever I look back on the evil that I have done. I, therefore, usually look ahead with the hope of doing some good to my fellow-men.

"But there is one incident that I will relate. For the last five years, a hard working mechanic, with a wife and several small children, came regularly, almost every night, to my tavern, and spent the evening in the bar-room. He came to drink, of course, and many and many a dollar of his hard earnings went into my till. At last he became a perfect sot—working scarcely one-fourth of his time, and spending all he earned in liquor. His poor wife had to take in washing to support herself and children, while he

spent his time and the little he could make, at my bar. But his appetite for liquor was so strong, that his week's earnings were usually all gone by Tuesday or Wednesday, and then I had to chalk up a score against him, to be paid off when Saturday night came. The score gradually increased, until it amounted to three or four dollars, over his regular Saturday night's pay, when I refused to sell him any more liquor until it was settled. On the day after I had thus refused him, he came in with a neat mourning breast-pin, enclosing some hair—no doubt, I thought—of a deceased relative. This he offered in payment of what he owed. I accepted it, for the pin I saw at once was worth double the amount of my bill. I did not think, or indeed care about the question, whether he was the owner or not; I wanted my own, and in my selfish eagerness to get my own, I hesitated not to take a little more than my own.

"I laid the breast pin away, and all things went on smoothly, for awhile. But he gradually got behind-hand again, and again I cut off his supply of liquor. This time he brought me a pair of brass andirons, and a pair of brass candlesticks, and I took them, and wiped off the score against him. At last he brought a large family Bible, and I took that too—thinking that no doubt I could sell it for something.

"On the Sunday afterwards, having nothing to do—for I used to shut my bar on Sundays, thinking that it was not *respectable* to sell liquor on that day—I opened this poor drunkard's family Bible, scarcely thinking of what I was doing. The first place I turned to was the family record. There it was stated that upon a certain day, he had been married to Emily ——. I had known Emily ——, when I was a young man, very well, and had once thought seriously of offering myself to her in marriage. I remembered her happy young face, and seemed suddenly to hear a tone of her merry laughter.

"'Poor creature!' I sighed involuntarily as a thought of her present condition crossed my mind—and then with no very pleasant feelings I turned over another leaf. There was the record of the births of four children; the last record had been made recently, and was in the mother's hand.

"I never had such strange feelings as now came over me. I felt that I had no business with this book. But I tried to stifle my feelings, and turned over several leaves quickly. As I suffered

my eyes to rest upon an open page, these words arrested my attention:

"'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; whoso is deceived thereby is not wise.'

"This was just the subject, that, under the feelings I then had, I wished to avoid, and so I referred to another place. There I read:

"'Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath wounds? Who hath babbling? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine. At the last it biteth like a serpent, it stingeth like an adder.'

"I felt like throwing the book from me. But once more I turned the leaves, and my eyes rested upon these words:

"'Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink; that puttest thy bottle to him and makest him drunken.'

"I closed the book suddenly, and threw it down. Then, for half an hour, I paced the room backwards and forwards in a state of mind such as I had never before experienced. I had become painfully conscious of the direful evils resulting from intemperance, and still more painfully conscious, that I had been a willing instrument in the spread of these evils. I cannot tell you how much I suffered during that day and night, nor describe the fearful conflict that took place in my mind, between the selfish love of the gains of my calling, and the plain dictates of truth and humanity. It was about nine o'clock, I think, on that evening, that I opened the drunkard's Bible again, with a kind of despairing hope that I should meet there with something to direct me. I opened at the Psalms and read two or three chapters. As I read on, without finding anything that seemed to apply directly to my case, I felt an increasing desire to abandon my calling, because it was injurious to my fellow men. After I had read the Bible, I retired to bed, but could not sleep. I am sure that during that night I thought of every drunken man to whom I had sold liquor, and of all their beggared families. In the brief sleep that I obtained, I dreamed that I saw a long line of tottering drunkards, with their wives and children in rags. And a loud voice said—'Who hath done this?'

"The answer, in a still louder voice, directed, I felt, to me, smote upon my ear like a peal of thunder:

"'Thou art the man!'

"From this troubled slumber I awoke to sleep no more that night. In the morning the last and most powerful conflict came. The question to be decided, was,

"'Shall I open my tavern, or at once abandon the dreadful traffic in liquor poison?'

"Happily, I decided never again to put to any man's lips the cup of confusion. My next step was to turn the spicket of every keg or barrel of spirits, wine, beer, or cider, and let the contents escape upon the floor. My bottles and decanters were likewise emptied. Then I came and signed your total abstinence pledge, and what is better, never rested until I had persuaded the man whose Bible had been of so much use to me, to sign the pledge likewise.

"And now, Mr. President, I am keeping, at my old stand, a Temperance Grocery, and am making restitution as fast as possible. There are at least half a dozen families, that my tavern helped to make poor and wretched, to whom I furnish a small quantity of groceries every week, in many cases equal to the amount that used to be spent at my bar for liquor. Four of my oldest and best customers, have already signed the pledge by my persuasion, and I am not going to rest, until every man that I helped to ruin, is restored to himself, his family, and society."

A round of hearty applause followed this address, and then another of the reformed drinkers took the floor.

AFTER TO-DAY; OR, TREATING RESOLUTION.

He was past the prime of life, and his whole appearance was that of a man with an original good constitution, broken down by dissipation. There was not that cheerful air about him, that had been exhibited by the last two speakers. When he spoke, there was something subdued and melancholy in his tone.

"I have never, before this moment," he began, "attempted to address an audience, and were it not that I feel constrained to do so, under the belief that what I have to say will be useful to some here, who may not yet have fully made up their minds to sign the pledge, I should most certainly hold my peace.

"Twenty years ago, Mr. President, three men sat drinking in the Theatre tavern, Holliday street. For five or six years previous, they had met there, regularly, every evening, to drink, smoke, and talk politics. Of course, their love of liquor, from being thus regularly indulged, increased, until all three were usually two-thirds intoxicated every night. When I say two-thirds, I mean that near to perfect insensibility. One of these men, Mr. President, now addresses you. The other two are dead. But, I must not anticipate.

"On the night to which I allude, being somewhat at a loss for a subject, we commenced talking about our mutual capacity for imbibing liquor, and, finally, resolved to enter upon a regular contest.

"'What kind of liquor shall we drink?' asked one, whose name was Joseph—or Joe, as we familiarly called him.

"'I go in for pure brandy'—I replied—

"'No—gin—' responded the third, whose name was Henry.

"'Good old Irish whiskey is my favorite,' said Joe, 'and at good old Irish whiskey I can put you both under the table.'

"'I doubt it,' the other remarked. 'But I'm for a better test than either brandy, gin, or whiskey'

"'What is that, Harry?' I asked.

"'Why, all these, one after the other, and ale, wine, and cider. That's the true test. First brandy, then wine, then whiskey, ale, gin and cider, a glass every five minutes. What do you say to that?'

"'I would rather not,' I said—for I had once been drunk on brandy and ale together, and knew what it was.

"'I'm agreed,' Joe said—

"'Well, what do you say?' Harry asked of me. 'Not afraid, I hope? I thought you more of a man.'

"I was just drunk enough to do almost anything if told that I was afraid, and so I agreed to the proposition. We then retired into a small room, in the centre of which stood a table, and arranging ourselves around it, called for three glasses of brandy. These were at once turned off, to begin with. Five minutes were allowed to pass, and then each drank half a pint of wine,—at the end of five minutes more, a strong draught of whiskey was taken, and so on until we had drank, besides these, ale, gin, and cider. This occupied just half an hour. By this time I began to feel a little light about the head. But I resolved not to be beaten, and so commenced and went through another course. By the time this was completed, the room seemed to be moving around; but brandy was again called for, and again the trial renewed. Four times did we drink, or at least, did I drink through this villainous series. The last thing I remember, was the vain effort to get a glass of cider to my mouth in the fourth round. I do not know whether I succeeded or not. When next conscious, I was lying on a bed, at home, with a physician by my side. My feelings were awful. It seemed as if my head would burst with the rending pain that throbbed through my temples; and my whole body felt as if swollen and benumbed by the heat of a large fire before which I seemed to be roasting alive. As soon as my recollection returned fully I became dreadfully alarmed, for it seemed impossible that I could live after what I had done. But, a good constitution carried me safely through.

"On the third day I was able to go out. The first man I met was my friend Joe. He looked pale and feeble.

"'I am really glad to see you, George!' he said, grasping my hand. 'I was afraid, from what I have myself suffered, that it was a gone case with you and Harry. How is he? Have you heard from him?'

"'No, I have not,' I replied.

"'Suppose, then, we go around and see him?

"I assented, and we called at his house. His wife, for he was married, met us at the door. She was the picture of woe. Her eyes were red with weeping and her face was pale, and wore an expression of deep, heart-aching distress.

"'How is Mr. ——?' we asked, anxiously.

"'Come in and see,' she said, and gave way for us to enter. We followed, as she led on, and in a moment or two entered a chamber where our friend lay, without life or motion, upon a bed. His eyes were half closed, and his face had a ghastly expression. As I paused, and bent over him, I placed my hand upon his forehead. Instantly I started back. That forehead was rigid and cold like marble.

"'Dead!' I exclaimed, striking my hands together, while my head reeled, and I became sick and faint.

"'Dead!' ejaculated Joe, staggering back, and sinking into a chair.

"Ah, sir! That was a terrible moment! When I had so far recovered my senses as to look about me again, I saw his poor wife seated by the bedside, silent and tearless. One little girl, his eldest child, was sobbing in a corner of the room, and a little boy, not over two years of age, had crept to his mother's side, and crouching there, hid his face in her lap. As for her, the heart-stricken wife and mother, her grief seemed too deep for utterance. There was something cold and frozen in the expression of her eye and face—something that I could not comprehend—something that I do not like to think of even now.

"We lingered in the chamber of death but a short time, and then went away. In the afternoon, we returned, by agreement, to make such arrangements for the funeral as were required under the circumstances. We knew that Mrs. —— had no one to perform these sad offices for her, and therefore, poorly as we both were, and much as we desired to shun so painful a scene as that which the house of our dead companion presented, we attended during that afternoon, and at the funeral, on the next day, to all the required arrangements.

"As the company that attended the remains of Mr. —— to the grave, turned away from the little hillock of fresh earth that marked the place where he was laid, Joe and I lingered behind.

"'I really feel awful about this,' I said, as we still remained standing near the spot where we had laid our friend.

"'Not worse than I do, George.'

"'If you 'll agree,' I said—'we will pledge ourselves here over Harry's grave, never, after this day to drink a drop of any kind of liquor. We can do without it Joe, for neither of us, I believe, has tasted anything stronger than tea or coffee since that night. It does n't do us any good—and has done us great harm.'

"'Agreed,' was Joe's prompt response. And arm in arm we took our way, with slow steps, towards the city. Our temperance resolution dispelled, in some degree, the sad depression of our spirits, and by the time we came to the edge of town we were conversing quite cheerfully. As we were passing the Vauxhall Gardens, in Light street, Joe paused, and said:

"'Come, George, let's have a drink!'

"'Did n't we promise each other not to take any more liquor after to-day?' I replied.

"'True! so we did.'

"Then, after a pause, he added:

"'But it 's *to-day* yet. *After* to-day, we will not drink. So come along, *let us treat resolution!* This is sad business that we have been on, and a little spirits will cheer us up.'

"The sight of the tavern in which I had drank so often, the idea of the liquor, suddenly conjured up in my mind, wrought so powerfully upon me, that it seemed almost impossible to resist the strong desire I felt for another drink.

"'You are right, I believe,' I said, after a single moment's hesitation. And then we went in and called for brandy and water.

"After drinking this, we sat down to look over the newspapers. I felt very comfortable, and quite happy in mind, as the pleasant excitement of the liquor began to pervade my whole body. Presently the appetite for another glass was felt, and I was just going to ask Joe to drink again, when he anticipated me, with—

"'As this is our last day, George, we must make good use of it; so come, let us have another drink.'

"I was ready to join him, of course. A third, a fourth, and a fifth drink followed in quick succession. And then we began to feel quite merry, and could even allude to our dead companion in a light and trifling way—

"'Harry thought to use us up, all to pieces,' Joe said, laughing. 'But he was n't half a man. I could kill a dozen like him.'

"To this, I remember I responded with a loud laugh. It seemed exceedingly smart. And then both of us jested, gaily, about our recent drinking duel, as we called it.

"It was after ten o'clock when we left the Vauxhall, and then we staggered off home, arm in arm.

"On the next morning I felt wretched, and blamed myself for having violated the spirit and meaning of the pledge I had taken over Harry's grave. But during the morning I met Joe.

"'Well, George,' he said, laying his hand familiarly upon my shoulder. 'Are you going to drink any more after to-day?'

"'No, I am not,' I replied positively.

"'Then come, let us treat resolution, and have a glorious spree while to-day lasts.'

"'Joe! you are trifling in a serious matter!'

"'Not a bit. You ain't going to drink any more *after to-day*, neither am I; and surely we ought to have one good time before we bid our old friend brandy good-bye. So come along, George, for I 'm awful dry.'

"And he caught me by the collar, and almost dragged me into a tavern near which we were standing. Once within the charmed precincts of a bar-room, all power of resistance was gone, and I drank eagerly and freely.

"I made no further effort to keep my twice broken pledge. Whenever Joe and I met, after that, the question usually was,

"'Well Joe!' or 'Well George, when are you going to reform?'

"'After to-day,' was, of course, the witty answer, and then came the response:—

"'Well, come along, and let us treat resolution.'

"Since that time, until within a few weeks, Mr. President, I have been a regular drinker; becoming more and more enslaved every year to the debasing vice. But I will not detain this company by relating to them the particulars of an ill-spent, useless life; a life of wretchedness, and painful degradation. I sunk very low, sir, and I suffered much more than tongue can tell.

"It was about five years ago, that Joe entered the United States army, as a private soldier. He had become so worthless

that no one would give him work, and to prevent starving, or going to the poor-house, he enlisted.

"From the day I parted with him at the fort, a few weeks after his enlistment, until six weeks ago, I neither saw nor heard of Joseph ——. I knew not whether he were living or dead.

"It is between one and two months since, that, as I was staggering up McLellan's alley, one night after having filled myself with liquor at Mrs. H——'s oyster house, I heard some one groan. I was near Fayette street, and the sound came from the entrance of the narrow alley that runs in the rear of the Fountain stables. I paused to listen, and the groaning was repeated. There was something in the sound that half sobered me, and produced an involuntary desire to go back a few steps and see who was suffering in such a deserted spot, at such an hour. As I obeyed this impulse, I became still further sobered.

"'Who's there?' I cried, as I paused at the entrance of the alley.

"My question was answered by a deep groan, almost at my feet. I started, and looking more narrowly around, saw a dark mass near where I stood. A closer observation revealed the figure of a man. To my repeated questions, the only answer I could get was groan after groan, that seemed of mortal agony. I took hold of him, and attempted to lift him up. But he had only one leg! In endeavoring to support him on this, I grasped at his right arm, and found in my hand but a small protruding stump!

"I then laid him down gently, and went over to a house opposite, to get assistance. It happened to be the house of a temperance man.

"'What do you want,' he asked, 'at this late hour?'

"'I want help for a poor creature in the alley here, who is dying, I fear,' I replied.

"'A drunkard, I suppose,' he said, as he reached for his hat.

"'I should think so,' was my reply.

"He accompanied me at once, and we succeeded, in a few minutes, in getting the poor wretch into his house. He presented, indeed, a pitiable spectacle. He had but one arm, and one leg; appeared to be drunk to unconsciousness; was sick, and perhaps dying. His face was shockingly distorted and disfigured by exposure and the effects of habitual drunkenness. Really I felt appalled as I looked at him, and thought that all this was rum's doings.

"'What ails you?' asked the kind individual who had taken him in, as he laid him down before a good warm fire.

"But the drunkard murmured something incoherent.

"'Are you sick?' he inquired.

"'Yes,' was half articulated, showing that he was in some degree conscious.

"'What ails you? what can we do for you?' continued the man.

"'Give me, ah—give me, ah—drink,' he replied, in a thick, muttering, drunken tone.

"A glass of water was held to his lips, as I raised him, myself scarcely able to stand from intoxication.

"'Ugh!' he ejaculated, as the water entered his mouth, starting back, and discharging what he had taken, with the strongest indications of disappointment and disgust.

"'Gin, whiskey, rum, anything!" he now said with an earnest, rapid articulation, endeavoring to support himself with his hand—'Give me liquor or I shall die.'

"'I cannot give you liquor. But you shall have coffee, tea, anything you want, but liquor,' his stranger-friend replied, soothingly and kindly.

"'No—no—no! Give me liquor,' was the earnest response.

"'Liquor will do you no good, my friend,' he replied, 'and therefore I cannot give it to you. You must stop drinking, or it will kill you.'

"'So I will stop, *after to-day!* Ha! ha! ha! Wasn't that a good joke!' And the poor wretch swung his single arm around his head in momentary excitement; but, alas! like the flashing up of a dying taper, it was the last feeble glimmer of life. He fell back, as his arm returned nerveless to his side, and, in a minute after, was a ghastly corpse.

"Once again, in many years, I was perfectly sober. And I stood, horror-stricken, by the side of the mutilated, disfigured and lifeless body of my old friend Joe ——. But the sight was too painful, and I turned away and left the house, sick at heart. I still had a home left; thanks to a neglected, abused, and sorrow-stricken creature, who clung, despite the remonstrances, advice, and anger of her friends, to the debased, unfeeling wretch she still called by the name of husband. But for her tender care, her unswerving affection, I should long ago have

been dead. To my home I returned; my poor, comfortless home, and entered just as the clock struck twelve. I found my patient wife still sitting up, and sewing by the light of a small dimly burning lamp. As I entered, she lifted her pale, thin face, and looked into my own with something so sad, so tender, so heart-touching in its expression, that I was affected almost to tears. How many, and many a time, no doubt, has she looked at me thus, and I too drunk to perceive or feel its import.

"'Sarah,' I said, walking steadily towards her, for I was never more perfectly sober in my life; 'Sarah, I've quit drinking; from this moment I will never touch liquor again!'

"O, sir, if you could have seen that poor creature, as I did, start to her feet, and stand looking at me, for a moment or two, her face agitated with doubt and hope, fear and joy, you would have been moved to tears! But she saw that I was in earnest; she felt that I was in earnest, and springing to my side, she laid her head upon my shoulder, as I drew my arm tightly around her, and wept and sobbed passionately. But her tears were tears of joy and hope.

"On the next day, I signed the pledge and though still a sad, yet I trust, that I am a better and wiser man. As for my home, there has been sunlight there ever since. O, sir! This pledge:"

But the man's voice trembled—tears sprung to his eyes; and, overcome by emotion, he was forced to take his seat.

SIGNING THE PLEDGE.

THE time had gone on until nearly ten o'clock, and, as the last speaker took his seat, Mr. Mitchell, the President, rose, and in a brief, but pertinent address, invited and urged those who had not yet done so, to come forward and sign the pledge. The Secretary was then directed to read the pledge, which was done. After this followed a scene hard to be described.

"Come along," cried the President, as the Secretary resumed his seat. "Who will sign first to-night? Ah! there he comes! The very man for whom I have been waiting these two months. That's right, friend L——. I thought we should get hold of the same end of the rope again. Many a drinking frolic, and fishing frolic have we been on, together! And now we strike hands again;" grasping the hand of the individual he was addressing, who had, by this time, reached the Secretary's table—"and shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand, and heart to heart, will we wage together, a war of extermination against old KING ALCOHOL and all his emissaries!"

The man who had gone forward was one well known in the community. He was an old drinker, and, although he had, from a strong resolution, been able thus far, to keep from sinking into a low and abandoned state, yet, his example and encouragement had been exceedingly pernicious, and very many, who had commenced drinking with him, had already become mere sots. For a time, he had sneered at the temperance movement. But he had now yielded to its imposing claims.

"You never did a better deed than that in your life, friend L——!" the President said in a lively, exulting tone, as the man rose from the Secretary's table. "And now who will come next?"

"Come along!" I heard a man say, in an under tone, near me, and I turned to observe him. He had a miserable looking

creature—bloated, disfigured, ragged and filthy—by the arm, and was endeavoring to urge him to go up and sign. But the drunkard hesitated and held back.

"Come! come! Go up, now! You will never repent it!" urged the temperance man.

"I do n't think it 's any use," the poor creature said. "I 'm sure I can 't keep it."

"O yes you can! I know you can! There 's old B——, who drank harder than you ever did. He signed last night."

"He did?" in tones of surprise.

"Certainly he did! And so did Mr. ——, who had n't drawn a sober breath in fifteen years."

"But they can 't keep it, I know they can 't."

"You do n't know any such thing! I know that they can keep it, and will keep it. And there 's Mr. F——, there, you know what a sot he was? He signed two months ago. Look at him now. He 's well dressed, looks cheerful, and has n't a carbuncle on his nose, that used to be as rough as the Liberty road, and as red as scarlet. Now do come along and sign to-night!"

"If I thought——"

"Do n't think any thing about it. Go right up and sign, and you are safe."

And as he said this, he gave the drunkard's arm a slight pull, and he yielded, and suffered himself to be led up to the Secretary's table, where he sat down and signed.

"Now do n't you feel better?" asked his persevering friend, as the two returned to their seats near me.

"Yes, I do,—a great deal better."

"Of course; and you are not sorry that you have signed, I know."

"O no. I 'm glad now. And I feel that I can keep it."

The smile that lit up his disfigured face, and the air of confidence that he assumed, were indeed pleasant to look upon.

"Ten names already!" the President now cried out, loud and cheerfully, "and the table crowded. Come along! we have room for hundreds and thousands; we 'll stay here all night if you 'll keep coming."

For about a quarter of an hour the table was crowded with men of all conditions in life, and of all grades of drunkenness; from the moderate drinker of two and three glasses a day, to the

wretched inebriate whose intolerable thirst forty or fifty "drinks" a day, could not satiate.

"Sixty names!" said the President, as the space in front of the Secretary's table became once more vacant. "We must have more than that number to-night. Yes, come along my friend!" he continued, his voice changing, to one of encouragement and sympathy, as he looked steadily towards the door. "Come along my friend, and we will do thee good!"

I glanced, as did many others, in the direction his eye indicated, and there, just within the door stood a man, who seemed half intoxicated. A woman, evidently his wife, was holding on to his arm, and apparently urging him to go forward and sign the pledge. Still he hesitated, and she urged with an earnestness that seemed all unconscious of the presence of a crowd. There was an immediate, profound silence throughout the room.

"Do go, John!" I could now hear the woman urging. "Do go! and we shall be so happy!"

"Yes, John, come along!" the President said, taking up the earnest persuasion of his wife—"and we shall all be so happy. Come along, my good man!"

The poor wife, thus suddenly conscious that all eyes were upon her, seemed painfully confused, and shrunk into the shadow of the entrance to the room. Her husband felt the general impulse, and started forward towards the Secretary's table. All was again hushed into profound silence. As he took the pen into his hand, and commenced writing his name, a sudden burst of weeping, half suppressed, was heard, distinctly, at the door. I am sure that there was not a dry eye in the house. My own were running over with blinding tears. But they were tears of joy. Who can tell—who can imagine the gladness of that poor wife's heart? After the man had signed, he returned to the door, and went out.

"O John, how happy I feel!" I could hear the wife say; and then both disappeared together.

"I can't stand that!" a man muttered in a low, but earnest voice, near me, rising to his feet as he spoke. "I must make my poor wife happy, too."

And he walked resolutely up to the table and signed.

"Come along, we are waiting!" again urged the President. "Don't put it off a single day. Come along, and make your

wives happy, as John did just now. None of you like to see their faces clouded, and yet how can sunshine rest there while you are neglecting and abusing them? Come along! Why, eighty signed at the last meeting, and here we have only sixty-two. Surely we hav n't got all the drunkards yet! O no. I see three or four down there that ought to sign. So come along my boys! If you want excitement, come and get a little of this tetotal excitement. It makes one feel a thousand times better than rum-excitement, and produces no after consequences but good ones. Ah! there comes another!—and another! and another. That 's the way. One helps another. You do n't know how much good you may do by coming forward. You influence one, and he another, and he another, and they others, until from the impulse given by a single individual, hundreds are brought in. There were only six at first, and now we have hundreds upon hundreds. Suppose these six had held back, where would we all have been? Come along, then, and do your duty to yourselves and to society."

To this about ten more responded.

The last but one who signed was, like many who had inscribed their names before him, poorly clad, and miserable in appearance. He came up reluctantly, urged and argued with at almost every step of the way by a person who seemed to take a deep interest in him.

"You must sign, Thomas! I shall never give you a moment's rest until you sign," I heard him say to the reluctant drunkard, who paused near where I was sitting, "I have helped to ruin you, and I shall have no peace until you are reclaimed."

"Let me have another week to think about it, Mr. W——"

"Another week, Thomas! Surely your poor wife and children have suffered enough already! Think of them and be a man."

This had the effect to cause the drunkard to move onward. But he paused again and again. At last, however, the table was reached, the pen placed in his hand, and his name inscribed.

How light was his step! How cheerful and resolute his air as he came down the aisle! I could hardly realize that it was the same individual.

"Ain't you glad that you have done it, Thomas?" his friend said, as they passed me.

"Indeed I am! But it was a hard struggle. I wanted to do it, and yet it was not easy to give up the liquor. But it's done now, and I am glad enough!"

"Any more?" the President asked.

"Yes, one more at least," said a man near the door, rising to his feet. "You've just got my last customer, and now you might as well have me. I've sold liquor for fifteen years. But you temperance folks have broken me up. And now I am forced to try some better and honester means of getting a living."

And so saying, he walked resolutely up to the table, and signed the pledge.

"And now, friend P——," the President said to him, "what are you going to do with the liquid fire you have on hand?"

"What am I going to do with it?" he asked, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, what are you going to do with it?"

"As to that," the man replied, "I never gave the subject a thought."

"You won't sell it, I hope?"

"And why not?"

"Sell poison?"

"What shall I do? Give it away?"

"O no. That would be as bad."

"Well, sir, what would you do, if you were in my place?"

"Why I would throw every drop of it in the gutter. It will hurt no one there. You need n't be afraid of the hogs getting drunk, for a hog won't touch it."

"My liquors cost a good deal."

"No doubt of it. How much do you think?"

"Two hundred dollars, I should suppose."

"No more?"

"I think not."

"There must be some mistake in your calculation," the President said: "you have forgotten the sighs and tears of abused and neglected wives and children. The money that bought your liquor cost all these, and more."

The man paused a moment, and then said, emphatically:

"I'll do it! I've made enough men drunk in my time!"

And thus saying, he turned away and mingled with the crowd.

The books were then closed, seventy-five having signed the pledge that night. A few remarks were added by the President, and then the meeting broke up, and I returned home.

"How many a heart has been made glad to-night!" I said as I threw myself upon my bed, and lay, for hours, musing over the wonderful things I had seen, before my senses were locked in slumber.

THE TAVERN-KEEPER.

"COME, friend W——," said the President, during the evening on which I paid my third visit to the Washingtonians, "let us have your experience. That story about the 'Drunkard's Bible' has gone right home to the hearts and consciences of two or three tavern-keepers already, and there is no telling how much good may result from your coming out openly, and relating all you know of the evils of rum selling.'

It was some moments before the individual thus addressed responded to the call made upon him by the President of the society. He was, evidently, unwilling to recall the past. But at length he arose, and proceeded to give in his experience. It contained much of deep and painful interest, but many touching scenes were glanced at so briefly that I was far from being satisfied when he resumed his seat. I called upon him afterwards, and prevailed upon him to relate, more minutely than he had done at the meeting, the incidents that had struck me as of a peculiarly interesting character. These I now give in such a form as I think calculated to make the deepest and most salutary impression. I trust that no tavern-keeper (seller of intoxicating drinks) will turn away from this number under the fear that I am going to overwhelm him with an effusion of gall and bitterness. I design only to lift for him a mirror, in which he may see his own reflection—and surely he will not shut his eyes to this pictured image, when all men look upon him and see him as he really is.

THE TAVERN-KEEPER.

"I shall not attempt to justify myself," he said, "for having been a tavern-keeper. I might make many plausible excuses, but I will not conceal the fact that my reasons for first commencing, and afterwards continuing the traffic, were thoroughly selfish. I

sought to benefit myself only, regardless who might be injured. It is true that I thought but little of the consequences to others, unless the subject were presented to me by some friend of temperance and humanity, and then I sought excuses; or if these did not avail to check his expostulations, I would get angry and tell him, perhaps, that he had no business to meddle with what did not concern him.

"I was a journeyman mechanic when I first went into the business of selling liquor, and could earn, regularly, about thirteen dollars a week. I had two children, and was living very comfortably. But I was dissatisfied because I could not get ahead in the world. I wanted to make money fast. For some time I debated the propriety of commencing my business as a master-workman; but I had no capital, and dreaded getting in debt. At last it occurred to me, suggested no doubt by an evil spirit, that the most certain way to make money would be to open a small liquor store. Almost every one of my friends and acquaintances drank, and I thought that they might as well spend their money with me as with any one else. I talked with several of them and they encouraged me to enter the business, promising me their custom.

"From only one individual did I meet with opposition, and that individual was my wife.

"'Ann,' said I to her one day after I had pretty well made up my mind to open a grog shop, 'I believe I will try something else for a living; I have to work very hard now, and only make a bare subsistence.'

"'But what will you do?' she asked with an expression of concern.

"'I've been thinking about opening a small tavern: it requires hardly any capital, and money can be made at the business. There is Wartman, who keeps down in the Marsh Market Space; he commenced with only five dollars, and now he is making money like dirt.'

"'Indeed I would not, Thomas,' she replied earnestly, while a shadow fell upon her face.

"'But why would you not, Ann? I'm sure it is the easiest and most profitable business now going.'

"'That may be; but still, Thomas, I would n't go into it.'

"'You must give some reason for your objection, Ann,' I said

—'I have all the burden of providing for the family, and unless you can show me that it is wrong to keep a tavern, you ought not to make any opposition.'

"'I'm afraid it is wrong, Thomas,' she replied, in a more serious tone.

"'Wrong, Ann! how can you possibly make that out?'

"'There are so many drunken husbands and fathers now, and so many suffering wives and children in consequence, that I feel that it would be wrong for us to engage in the sale of liquor.'

"'But don't you see, Ann,' I urged, 'that we have nothing to do with that? These men will drink, anyhow. If I do not open a shop, they will drink none the less in consequence; and why should I lose all the benefit to be derived from the sale of liquor because a few wretched creatures abuse a good thing and make beasts of themselves.'

"'Still, Thomas,' urged my wife, 'I would rather that you would not open a shop; I am sure we are getting along very well; I have all that I want, and am very happy in our present lot.'

"'But don't you see that our family is increasing?' I said, 'and by and by we shall not be able to get along so comfortably as we now do.'

"'Let us trust in Providence, Thomas, and continue in a useful calling, from which no harm can possibly come to our neighbor,' Ann replied, not at all convinced by my method of reasoning.

"But my mind was now so nearly made up, that no argument or persuasion on the part of my wife could move me. In a short time I found a small house in Water street, into which I moved, with my family, and opened a liquor store.

"Among my first customers were three of my fellow-workmen, all steady men and temperate in their habits. They did not belong to a temperance society, for we had no temperance societies then; but they were not fond of drinking, and rarely went to a tavern. They were all married men, and all had children. As soon as I opened, these three men became regular visitors; they seemed to feel it a duty to encourage me, and drank more with that end in view than from any fondness for liquor. But I could soon perceive that an appetite was forming; and this discovery *pleased me very much*, at the same time that it pro-

duced in my mind a feeling of contempt for their weakness. It pleased me, because, as I had only a purely selfish end in view, I was gratified with every indication that the end I had proposed to myself would be attained. I saw that, from selling them only a glass or two every evening, I should ere long come to sell them a dozen or two glasses every day! These were the kind of customers I wanted—men who would spend some four or five dollars a week at my counter, regularly.

"The names of my three friends were Harrison Williams, Gustavus Ensler, and Manning Gray. Williams, at the time I opened my shop, had three children, a girl and two boys; the girl ten years old, and the boys, who were twins, seven years of age. His wife was a tidy woman, and took great pleasure in having everything around her neat and comfortable. She was tenderly attached to her husband and loved her children with a mother's earnest affection.

"One evening, about five months after I had commenced my new business, my wife said to me:

"'I saw Mrs. Williams in the street to-day, and she seemed so changed; she was pale, and had such a distressed look, my heart has ached for her ever since. What can be the matter? Something has gone wrong. She used to be so tidy and cheerful.'

"'It 's not so much to be wondered at,' I replied,—Williams has taken to drinking like a fish.'

"'O Thomas! is it possible!' my wife said, with an expression of pain in her countenance; 'he did n't drink a few months ago, for it is not long since I heard Mrs. Williams speak about her husband's being so steady and attentive to his family.

"I did not reply to this, for I remembered, rather too keenly, that for this declension I was responsible. But I dismissed the thought instantly. On the next day, while on the street for a few minutes, I met the wife of Williams returning from market. The day was a cold one, but she was poorly clad. How sad and distressed was the expression of her countenance! I can remember it, even now, for the recollection has been rendered vivid by many and many a dream, in which her troubled face was presented.

"I felt uneasy in mind for hours after. There was something in her countenance when I met her that, once seen, could not be soon forgotten. It haunted me like an upbraiding spectre. That evening her husband came in as usual to drink in my bar-room.

I looked at him as he came up to the counter and called for his first glass, more attentively than I had regarded him for some time. His face was not red and bloated as are the faces of many who drink to excess, but was thin and pale. Just as he was about to lift to his lips the liquor I had poured out for him, he was seized with a violent fit of coughing. That cough was as familiar to my ear as his voice; I had heard it in that room a hundred times, but had never remarked it particularly before.

"'That 's a very bad cough,' I said.

"'Yes, and I'm afraid it will kill me,' he replied.

"'It most certainly will, unless you quit drinking,' I had it on my tongue to say. But the thought of the four or five dollars a week that I received from him regularly, choked the humane admonition!

"If he has n't sense enough to see what 's for his own good, he must go on as he is; it is no concern of mine, and I shall not meddle with it,' I said to myself as I turned to wait on another customer. How often have I reasoned thus with myself, when the victim of the allurements which I had displayed for the weak and the unwary has stood before me!

"After this, I never could hear the loud, hollow, convulsive cough of my old fellow-workman without an unpleasant sensation.

"'You had better see a doctor about that cough, Williams,' I would say to him sometimes; or, 'You had better take care of that cough,' or, 'Do try and have something done for that cough!' But I never could bring myself to say—'You had better quit drinking, Williams, or that cough will kill you.'

"In about a year from the time I opened my grog shop, Williams became a perfect sot. Between ill health, brought on by drinking, and his indisposition, from intemperate habits, to work, he abandoned all attempts to provide for his family. The burden, of course, fell upon his wife; a burden which she was not able to bear. From a comfortable, well furnished house, she was driven, with her children, to a single room, in the garret of an old building in Commerce street. Alas what a change for one short year to accomplish! Ah! sir, the thought of that ruined family has been a thorn in my pillow many and many a time. But, with a resolute effort I steadily endeavored to harden my heart against the weakness, as I esteemed it, that made me feel troubled at such things.

"'I am not responsible,' I would argue, 'for these consequences: I do not tell men to get drunk and abuse their families; I do not wish them to do so. Liquor is good in its place, and so is bread and meat; but either used to excess is injurious. If I were to sell a man a razor, and he were to cut his throat, or a pistol, and he were to blow his brains out, surely I would not be responsible! If *I* don't sell liquor somebody else will, and as people will buy it, I can see no reason why I should not have the profit to be gained in the sale of it, as well as any one else.'

"Thus would I drive back and stifle the remonstrances within; and every time I did so, these remonstrances grew weaker and weaker.

"At last Williams became so feeble from the disease, the predisposing cause to which had been excited by drink, that he could only just creep about. He would come to my shop when he had no money and almost beg for liquor, which I would give him sometimes, and often refuse him. I could see the evil of his condition far more clearly when he had no money to pay me for liquor than I could when from one to five dollars of his money went into my till weekly. I could say to him now—

"'Williams, you had better stop drinking, or you cannot live; it is drink that excites your cough: try and quit it now, and I have no doubt but that you will recover again.'

"But my good advice came too late; both the disease and appetite were too deeply rooted. Unlike many wives, during this period of dreadful trial, Mrs. Williams never upbraided, never spoke unkindly to her husband; and he was, I have learned, never ill tempered at home.

"For a time the wife and mother was enabled, through incessant toil, early and late, to procure food for her children: but they were often reduced to pressing extremities. Sometimes the children would come to my shop for their father. I never liked this, for there was about them a look of patient suffering that troubled my conscience. They seemed to love their father tenderly, and their presence always appeared to awaken kind feelings in his bosom, enslaved as he was to the dreadful vice that had ruined himself, and entailed upon his family privation and misery in their worst forms. The daughter, then about eleven years of age, had the saddest face that I ever saw worn by a child. It was not disfigured, or rendered in its expression intensely painful,

but in its quiet, unobtrusive, yet patient look of hopeless suffering, there was something that must have excited tears in any one, not hardened as I already was.

"It was, I think, about eighteen months after Williams had commenced visiting my shop regularly, that he failed to make his usual daily visits. I felt relieved at this, for his presence had worried me for some time. He rarely had any money to spend for liquor, and there was already a score against him which I knew it was impossible for me to collect. But, besides all this, I could not shut my eyes to the fact that in him was presented one of the first fruits of my experiment in tavern-keeping. Reason as I would upon the subject, I could not make it appear, even to my own mind, that I was altogether guiltless in his ruin.

"For nearly two months, I saw nothing more of him. And I never made inquiry, for I dreaded to hear his name mentioned. —But one morning, about this time, his little girl came in. How I did shrink from this unwelcome apparition. She looked pale and distressed—was poorly clad and barefoot.

"'Mr. W——,' she said coming up to the bar, 'father wishes to see you, if you will please to come down to our house.'

"'I can't spare the time, little girl,' I replied. 'Why can't your father come and see me?'

"'Because he's sick. And he's been sick for a good while.'

"'Is he very sick?' I asked.

"'O yes. He can't sit up but a little time, and then he coughs, oh, so dreadfully!'

"'What does he want to see me for?'

"'I don't know, sir. But he does want to see you so bad. Do come, Mr. W——!'

"There was something in the manner and tone of the child that I could not resist, and so I promised that I would call down and see her father in the course of the morning. It was about two hours after that I entered one of those old brick houses that used to stand in Commerce above Pratt street—now displaced by a row of large warehouses. On asking for Williams's family, I was directed to ascend to the garret. Up three pairs of dirty and dilapidated stairs I went until I reached the attic. There I paused, before entering one of the apartments, into which I could see, though unperceived myself. I shall never forget what I there witnessed, though I have tried hundreds and hundreds of

times to drive it from my memory. The noise of my ascending steps had been drowned to the inmates of that meagerly furnished room, by the convulsive cough that racked the frame of poor Williams.

"'Let me get up, Mary,' I heard him say, as the cough subsided. 'I shall die if do not sit up!'

"Then I could see him trying to raise himself from the bed, while his wife gently drew her arm around him, and then let his head fall upon her bosom.

"'There, that will do, will it not?' she said tenderly, as his head reclined a little backwards.

"'O no, no, Mary! I shall suffocate! Let me get up and sit in a chair for a little while.' And then his cough returned, agitating his whole frame violently.

"When this subsided, his wife assisted him to get upon the floor, and then, for the first time in many weeks, I saw his face. O, how thin and pale it was! And in it there was the ghastly expression of death!

"'There, that will do,' he said in a feeble voice as he sunk into a chair, and let his head recline upon the bosom of his wife, while she held his body in an erect position.

"All was in a few moments as still as if no living beings were in that miserable room. His two little barefooted boys seated themselves near him, with an earnest affection that his conduct towards his family had not been able to change, and while one looked up to him with a sorrowful countenance, the other hid his face, and wept noiselessly. As for the daughter who had called for me, her heart seemed touched by a consciousness that the worst had come. She stood near, weeping, but in silence.

"For a moment or two I hesitated whether to enter or retire. 'Why does he wish to see me?' I asked of myself. Perhaps to upbraid me with having ruined him and beggared his family,' was the inward response.

"I could not but shudder at such thoughts, as I stood with Williams's distressed family before me; for I felt conscious that I had, indeed, been the cause of all this—and conscious, likewise, that death was very near, even upon the threshold of that humble apartment.

"I debated the question only for a few moments. Another violent fit of coughing disturbed the deep silence of the room, when

I retired, the noise of my footsteps unobserved. Thus coward-like I retreated, for I could not face that man in life's last extremity, amid the sad mementoes of the ruin I had occasioned.

"He died in an hour after. I have never known why he wished to see me. As for his distressed family they were taken away from the city by some friends who lived in a neighboring town, and I have never, since that moment, seen one of its members. But, if not present to my bodily eyes, they were, for many months afterwards, ever present to my mental vision.

"Ah, sir, is not the ruin of that family's hopes and happiness a terrible thing to have upon a man's conscience? I feel it so. For, look at it as I will, reason about it as I will, I cannot convince myself that I am not altogether responsible for Williams's degradation, and the ruin of his family. He was, as I have said, a temperate, industrious man, kind and provident to his family, when I opened my shop. And he came to my shop, at first, only under the kind and friendly impulse of assisting me by his custom in my new business. But in so doing, the appetite for liquor was formed and he was lost and his family ruined. A strange return indeed did I make him for his kind and generous feelings.

"If I ever repented seriously of having opened a shop for the sale of liquor, it was after the death of Mr. Williams. For weeks I was a sadder man. But gradually, as I resisted the impulse which I felt to give up the ruinous traffic, that impulse became weaker and weaker, and, at last, I could again pour out and mix liquors for a thirsty drunkard, who was reducing himself and his family to a state of ruin and degradation, without a single reproving emotion.

"'I never felt so bad in my life, as I did yesterday,' remarked Gustavus Ensler, one of my old fellow workmen, mentioned as among my earliest customers, coming in for his glass on the day after Williams's funeral.

"'Why?' I asked, not thinking, at the moment, to what he alluded.

"'To see poor Williams carried out of that garret as he was!'

"'Is Williams dead?' inquired one who had often seen him drinking at my bar.

"'Yes, poor fellow!' Ensler said. 'He has gone to his long home.'

"'I thought he could n't stand it a great while the last time I saw him,' the other said.

"'What ailed him?'

"'Consumption,' I replied, quickly.

"'Consumption brought on by drinking!' Ensler said, coolly and deliberately, looking me steadily in the face. 'That was it, I believe, Mr. W——. Do n't you think so?'

"'No! I do not think so,' I responded, in a positive tone of voice.

"'Well, I do then. And what is more, I know so! Before you opened this shop, Mr. W——, he had n't a sign of a cough. And you know that he did n't drink a drop then once in a month. But after he began drinking pretty hard, his cough commenced and grew worse and worse until it killed him.'

"'Well, I don 't believe a word of it!' I said doggedly. 'He would have died anyhow.'

"'Not in a garret at least!' Ensler said, looking at me significantly.

"'What do you mean?' I asked in an angry tone, for I felt that more was implied than were contained in his words.

"'I 'll tell you what I mean,' said my old fellow workman, now a little excited by liquor, straightening himself up, and eyeing me steadily, and somewhat contemptuously. 'I mean, that if you had n't taught him to love liquor in this confounded grog-shop of yours, and then taken away all his money that should have gone to the support of his family, he would n't have died in a garret. That is what I mean!'

"'Truth bites sore,' is a homely but expressive adage. I felt the truth of what Ensler said, and it roused me into a violent passion.

"'Go out of my shop, you insulting scoundrel!' I responded, loud and angrily, coming out from the bar, and confronting him in the middle of the room.

"'I 'll go out when I please,' was his cool reply.

"'If you do n't go out I will kick you out!' This I said with a determination to do what I threatened.

"'Two can play at such a game, remember,' he said, calmly, still eyeing me without the slightest apparent sensation of fear. Seeing that I hesitated to put my threat into execution, he added, as he took a deep inspiration,

"'And now, Mr. W——, that I feel in the humor, I will tell you a piece of my mind that I have long wished to speak out. In my opinion you are little better than a land-pirate. It is true, you don't kill bodies for money—but you do worse. You corrupt and ruin souls, and trifle with the hopes and happiness of whole families for gain. You kill the better part for gold! Eighteen months ago, there were in this city, three happy families, at the head of which were three sober, industrious, and kind husbands and fathers. At that time you opened this shop, and invited those husbands and fathers to come up and help you to get along in the world. And they came. They bought your liquor, not because they loved to drink it, but because they wished to encourage their fellow workman. But, they soon got to love it, and you encouraged them to drink. You saw their danger, and instead of warning them, you spread new allurements in their way, thus wooing and wooing them on to ruin, that you might build yourself up upon their downfall. You have increased in worldly goods — and they have decreased. Yesterday one of your victims was buried from a garret—was taken out from amid his half-starving wife and children, and buried in the potter's field! The other I saw staggering in the street as I came here this morning; and here is the third, a poor, fallen, debased drunkard! Look at your handy work!'

"And the poor creature drew himself up and stood confronting me.

"'Out of my house this instant, or I will be the death of you!' I cried, passionately, advancing a step towards him in a menacing attitude.

"But he did not move a foot or change a muscle.

"'There is little left to kill,' he said in a mournful tone, seeing that I hesitated. 'You have begun the work, it is but meet that you should finish it. Strike! I am ready!'

"There was a moral dignity in the voice, manner, and expression of the poor wretch whom I had been instrumental in ruining, that subdued me. I could not touch him. My anger subsided, and I felt as I never felt before. O, how wretched, and conscience-stricken!

"'Go away, Gustavus,' I said in a changed voice. 'Go away, and do not come here any more. If I have been the cause, as you say that I have, of your ruin, be your own saviour

from that ruin. Go away! Quit drinking, and be a man again.'

"I felt some touches of kindness towards him, and my voice expressed my feelings. He looked at me for a moment or two, and then bursting into tears, said—

"'I will be a man again! From this hour I will never drink a drop!'

"Then he turned away slowly and left my house.

"'Why what in the world has come over our old crony Gus?' said Manning Gray, the other individual of the trio of friends whom my shop had ruined, on the next morning as he came in.

"'What is the matter with him?' I asked in some concern.

"'He 's sworn off, he says,' Gray replied, laughing in great glee at what seemed to him a good joke.

"'Sworn off from drinking?' I inquired.

"'Yes, he says he 's not going to touch another drop of liquor as long as he lives! Ha! ha! ha!'

"'Well, Manning, do you know what I would do if I were in your place?' I said.

"'No. What would you do?'

"'Why I would follow his example.'

"'Swear off?'

"'Yes.'

"'You 're joking?'

"'I never was more serious in my life,' I said. And I was serious. I had seen enough of Williams and Ensler. I had found that it was no light thing to be instrumental in ruining a friend. Not that I cared for others—I cared only for myself, and sought merely to save myself from unpleasant consequences.

"'You have drunk long enough and hard enough,' I continued. 'Stop now, while there is some little power left.'

"'Ha! ha!' he responded gaily. 'Our landlord has turned temperance preacher! That is too good! No, no, friend W——, you do n't come it over me in that way. Give us a gin toddy, and make it good and strong.'

"'No, Manning, I will do no such thing,' I replied. 'I have sold you the last glass of liquor that you will ever drink at my bar.'

"'You are not in earnest, W——,' he said, his manner becoming instantly changed.

"'Yes I am in earnest,' was my positive answer.

"It was fully half an hour before I got him to leave my house. During that time he used towards me the severest and most insulting language that he could utter, all of which I endeavored to bear in the best way that I could. It availed nothing that I steadily persisted in not selling him liquor, he still continued to drink and neglect his family, and died finally in the street, a drunkard to the last.

"But Ensler became a sober, industrious man, and in the course of a year or two, had everything around him again comfortable.

"As for myself, I found the sale of liquor to be profitable, and commenced gradually to accumulate a little money. Two years after I had opened my grog shop in Water street, I was offered the tavern on —— road, about six miles from the city. It was represented to have a good wagon and travellers' custom, and as I had money enough already laid by to purchase the necessary furniture, I accepted the proposition and moved out. My family then consisted of my wife and three children, the eldest, a boy, about eleven years of age.

"While moving in my furniture, a venerable old man waited on me, and introduced himself as a minister, who had lived in the little town upon the edge of which the tavern stood, for the last thirty years. I, of course, received him kindly, and invited him to walk in and sit down.

"'So you are to be our tavern-keeper,' he said, with a smile, after we were seated alone.

"'Yes,' I replied, with a feeling of self-satisfaction at the position of importance that I was evidently about to occupy in the village. 'I have come here for that purpose.'

"'Well, tavern-keepers are very useful people,' the old man said. 'But there is one thing about which I should like to talk with you, before you open your house. All who have been here before you, have kept a bar for the sale of liquors; and it has done great harm in our village. Now, as a lover of mankind, I feel bound to approach you, thus early, upon this subject, and I do hope that you will regard my remonstrance against the sale of liquor.'

"'But that would never do, sir,' I replied. 'Who ever heard of a tavern without a bar?'

"'I know' he said, in a mild tone, 'that it is usual for those who keep houses of entertainment for travellers and the public, to sell intoxicating liquors; but I never could see why this was necessary.'

"'It is necessary, for, in its sale, lies the principal source of profit derived from the business.'

"'But, surely, my friend,' the old man urged—'a mere question of dollars and cents should never decide any one to do a thing that will injure his neighbor. And, certainly, to tempt those who are too weak to resist an inclination thus tempted, is to do a very great injury.'

"'You would not have me to be too disinterested,' I replied. 'I might starve to death for the good of my neighbors, and they would n't thank me for it. And besides if I did n't sell liquor to people who wanted it, they would go somewhere else and get it.'

"'I know, my friend,' the minister said, in his mild, yet earnest way—'that your last argument is thought to be a very strong one. But it will not apply with its usual force here. We have no place in our village where liquor is sold.'

"'You have a store, I am sure,' I said interrupting him.

"'True. But the man who keeps it has a conscientious regard to the good of his neighbor. He does not sell liquor.'

"'Why, I never heard of such a thing!' I responded, inwardly delighted at the idea that I should have a monopoly of the business.

"'Still it is true in this instance. And I most earnestly hope that I shall be able to prevail on you to follow so good an example.'

"At this I shook my head.

"'I do not profess to be quite so disinterested,' was my answer, 'as all that comes to. I keep tavern for my own benefit, the same as you preach for your benefit. People are free agents, you tell us, and if they want liquor, they should be free to drink it. I shall, therefore, most certainly keep it, and sell it to all who wish to buy.'

"The old man looked deeply and painfully concerned at this, and once more attempted to influence me.

"'Surely,' he urged, 'you cannot speak your real sentiments. Every man is bound to regard the effect which his conduct will have upon others. I cannot think that you are so thoroughly

devoted to gain, as to shut out from your mind every benevolent feeling. The man who robs another of his money, only acts independent of law, upon the same principle that you profess to act under the protection of the law. He has only a regard for himself, and looks upon all mankind as fit subjects of plunder. You, acting upon such motives as you declare, in engaging in a traffic that injures your fellow men, do not really stand, in a moral point of view, upon a higher basis. He takes away their money forcibly, while they are in a rational state of mind—you render them, in a certain sense, irrational, and take the money which they freely tender while in that state. Now, seriously, my friend, discriminate, if you can, between the moral guilt of the two actions. Both are under the promptings of a selfishness that has no regard for others. The one takes the money of his victims by violent means—the other, by allurements spread forth for a depraved appetite, secures to himself their money, and not only beggars those who yield it, even if it be given voluntarily, but brutalizes them, and entails the deepest misery and often the greatest sufferings upon their families. Ah, sir! viewed in this aspect, the effect of the man's acts upon society who sells intoxicating liquor, is a thousand times more injurious than that of the robber who takes only the gold of the individual he plunders.'

"There was the power of truth in what the old man said. But the truth, when brought into opposition to what a man not only wishes, but is resolved to do, always irritates him. I, of course, felt very angry at what the minister said, and replied in an excited tone,

"'I cannot suffer myself to be insulted in my own house, even by an old man and a minister! You class me with thieves and robbers, and then try to influence me, even while you declare that I am worse than those outlaws who plunder society. I will not hear such language, sir!'

"'Pardon me,' the old man said, meekly, 'if I have offended you. I did not wish to do so. I only presented, in the strongest possible light, your acts as a seller of intoxicating drink, in the hope that such a view would influence you. If you do not see that view to be a correct one, I cannot but regret it exceedingly. The consequence to many in this village, if you persist, will be, I know, deplorable.' And the old man's voice trembled, and had in it something very mournful.

"To this, I made some angry reply that cut short the interview, and then the minister retired. Of course his visit troubled me. But I shook off its influence, as well as I could, and went on to arrange my bar, and make as handsome a display of my liquors as possible. In a few days I was ready to open my tavern and receive customers. I had everything very neatly arranged, so as to make my house attractive as a place of resort, both to the young men of the village, and for the reception of such visitors as I expected from the city during the summer season.

"On the evening of the day upon which I announced, by handbill, that my tavern was open, and my bar well stocked with the choicest liquors, I had about a dozen visitors, principally residents of the village. They admired the arrangement of my bar, complimented me on my taste, and drank and paid for my liquors freely, which they pronounced to be of the very best quality.

"Among them was a young man, whose appearance interested me at once. He was not, apparently, over twenty years of age. His dress, manners, and language, indicated that he was far superior in education to any of those with whom he was associated. I observed that he drank often and freely—the consequence was, that he became partially intoxicated early in the evening.

"'Now give us a song, Samuel!' said one of the company, about nine o'clock, slapping him on the shoulder.

"'Yes, a song! a song! Nobody can sing a song like Sam Harman!' responded another.

"'Would you prefer a song to a hymn tune, or a hymn to a song tune?' the young man replied, with a grave air.

"'Oh, a hymn to a song tune of course!' replied one.

"'No—no—' said another, 'a song to a hymn tune.'

"At last the matter was settled, and a song was sung with fine effect.

"'Now let us have a sermon,' cried one.

"'Yes, a sermon!' a sermon!' ran around the room.

"And in a few moments the young man was mounted on a chair. He took a text, and went on to preach for about ten minutes, in a strain that indicated a finely cultivated mind, but alas! sadly perverted. Sometimes he would utter the most imposing and solemn truths, in a way that made the blood seem to trickle coldly through my veins—and then he would go off into a burlesque caricature, or light and witty declamation, that set the whole room in a roar of laughter.

"'What would the old gentleman think of that, if he had heard it,' said one of the company.

"'He would think his son quite a promising young man, I suppose,' replied Harman, laughing. 'I was set apart for a minister, you know, and I'm only trying to get my hand in a little.'

"'This was met, of course, by an encouraging laugh. It was nearly eleven o'clock when my company went away, and then the young man just alluded to, had to be supported by two of his drinking companions.

"On counting the money in my drawer, I found that I had made a very good beginning. My visitors understood the art of drinking. It was very certain, that they were no strangers to a bar-room.

"'I have done very well indeed,' I said to my wife, on closing my house for the night, 'I shall have plenty of custom here, I have not the least doubt.'

"'Who was the young man that sung so sweetly?' my wife asked.

"'I don't know who he is. But he is a smart fellow, that is certain. He preached a sermon to-night equal to any minister.'

"'But ain't it a pity,' my wife remarked, 'that such a young man should throw himself away?'

"'It does seem a pity. But he is young, and will be all the wiser, after a few years, for having sowed his wild oats.'

"'I hope so. But young men who drink, rarely become less fond of liquor as they grow older.'

"'Well, that's no concern of mine,' I replied, a little warmly.

"My wife understood my humor, and said no more on the subject."

Wishing, for greater effect, to combine incidents learned from the tavern-keeper and facts gathered from another source, I will, for a time, let him step aside, and relate things in my own way.

About nine o'clock on the evening succeeding the day on which W—— had opened his tavern, in the village of——, as has been above noted, the venerable old man, who had called upon him to remonstrate against the sale of liquor, sat conversing with his wife, likewise well stricken in years. The subject that occu-

pied their thoughts seemed to be a painful one, for upon each aged countenance rested an expression of deep concern.

"He has not been out so late as this for a week," remarked the old man, breaking in upon a silence of some moments.

"No, but perhaps he is spending the evening in Mr. Wilmot's family," was the doubting suggestion.

"There is little hope of that, I am afraid. To-day that wretched drinking-house at the lower end of the town was again opened, and I tremble lest our boy has been tempted to go there."

"Surely my child will not again visit a place that has, already, well-nigh ruined him!"

"I hardly dare hope," and as he said so, the old man drew towards him a large family Bible that lay upon the table near which he was sitting, and slowly turned over its sacred pages. It was the hour for evening prayer, and their youngest born, and only remaining child, was away; and worse than all, they feared, within the fangs of the destroyer. Before the father commenced reading, he paused, and listened for the sound of approaching footsteps.—But he listened in vain. Then, with a sigh, he turned to the holy book before him, and read a portion of its sacred truths. The prayer that succeeded, was offered up in a deeply fervent, trembling voice.

"Father of mercies!" he said, as he drew near the close of his petition, and his tones were full of touching pathos, "Remember the child of many prayers! Regard the one so prone to wander away from Thee, seeking pasture upon the bleak and barren mountains of sin. O, bring him back, Good Shepherd, to thy fold, and incline his heart to love thy counsels! Thy servants are now well stricken in years, and are waiting patiently for their change. Let not their gray hairs go down in sorrow to the grave. Let them not see the son of their old age still straying from Thee, enticed away by the allurements of the wicked one. Thus we pray thee, for the son of our love. Hear us, and regard us, and pardon us, if in our earthly affections we presume to ask unwisely."

After they had risen from their knees, they sat silent and thoughtful for a long time, each listening, intently, for the sound of approaching footsteps.

"There he comes!" half whispered the mother, as a distant sound caught her ear.

And they both sat, half bending forward, noticing each footfall that drew nearer and nearer, yet still unable to determine whether it was their boy or not who was approaching. At last the sound was almost at their door, and with hearts beating audibly, they half arose from their seats, expecting, yet fearing, to see their child enter. But, alas! the sound went by, and grew fainter and fainter, until all was again hushed in deep and oppressive silence. A long, tremulous sigh, attested the disappointment that chilled their hearts, as they sunk back into the chairs from which they had half arisen.

A whole hour passed in anxious expectation, and still the son came not. At the end of that time, the old man said—

"You had better go and lie down, Rachel; I will wait for Samuel."

"No—I will sit up with you. I could not sleep if I were to go to bed. But where can he be?"

"Let us prepare our hearts for the worst, Rachel," the old man said, meekly bowing his head, and endeavoring to lift his heart upwards. "Our child is in the hands of One who cares for him, and who loves him with a purer love than our weak hearts are capable of feeling, and let us trust him there. I know, for myself, that I have made an idol of that boy. He was our youngest, most beautiful, and most innocent child. How often have I looked into his gentle face, and trembled lest he should be taken away. He seemed too lovely, too pure, in his early years, to live in this world of sin and misery. Alas! that his garments should be soiled! That he should fall in love with evil!"

The maternal response to this was a gush of tears, accompanied by a low, suppressed moan, and then all was again as silent as death. Another hour passed slowly away, and yet there was no indication of the approach of the absent one. Who can tell, who can imagine all, nay, even a tithe of what the hearts of that aged couple must have suffered during that hour of painful suspense!

"I can bear this no longer," the old man said, as the clock rung out with, to them, startling distinctness, the hour of eleven, rising at the same time, and taking up his hat and cane.

"Hark!" ejaculated the eagerly listening, expectant mother, as the sound of the clock died away, and there fell around them again a deep, oppressive silence.

"What?" asked the father in a deep whisper, bending his ear towards the door, "I do n't hear anything."

"There, do n't you hear that?" the mother said, as a distant but almost imperceptible sound came borne on the sluggish air.

"I cannot hear anything," the father responded in a disappointed tone as he raised himself up from his listening attitude.

"There it is again!" ejaculated the mother—"it is like a distant laugh. There, do n't you hear it?"

"Yes I do, now, distinctly: some drunken revellers, no doubt, from W——'s tavern. Pray heaven our boy be not among them!"

The sounds that had in their far-off, low murmur, been perceived by the mother's quick ear, became louder and more distinct. Now some snatches of a song could be heard, now a loud laugh, and anon a wild scream, rising on the still air and dying away in distant echoes.

The minister's house stood upon the principal street of the village, and along this street the party of noisy revellers were approaching. As they drew nearer and nearer the father and mother listened anxiously for the voice of their son. Now it seemed to them that its familiar tones came upon their ears, but still they doubted and trembled in heart with an uncertain fear.

A few moments passed, the sounds drawing nearer and nearer, and then all was hushed into silence. Presently there was a hurried whispering close by the window. In the next moment, the door opened, and their boy, their youngest born and dearest one was thrust in, and came reeling across the floor!

Neither the father nor the heart-stricken mother uttered a word, although both instantly arose to their feet as their son came in thus, bearing about him the indubitable evidences of having again been indulging a vice to which, even thus early in life, he had shown a strange inclination. For a moment the old man looked at his boy, and in that moment there was in his heart a powerful struggle with emotions that well-nigh mastered him; then he took him calmly by the hand and led him away to his chamber, where he left him in silence and in darkness.

Side by side, with sleep banished from their eyelids, did the aged minister and his wife lay for hours, but neither could suggest to the other a thought of comfort. It was nearly daydawn, when wearied nature sought refuge in a troubled slumber.

On the next morning Mr. Harman felt a painful sense of weakness and incompetency, as he thought of his son, and of his duty

in regard to him. That son had now arrived at years of rationality, and he could not, therefore, use any measures of compulsion; and remonstrance and persuasion he felt to be almost in vain, where shame seemed to be impotent in its influence over him. He did not, when he met him at the breakfast table, make any allusion to the occurrence of the previous evening; but he could not be familiar with him, nor cheerful in his manner. As for the mother, her countenance was a sad index of the anguish of her mind. The morning meal passed, of course, in painful, embarrassing silence, and was quickly over. After rising from the table, the young man took down his hat and was moving towards the door, when his father said in a low, but meaning tone—

"Samuel!"

The son turned quickly round and looked his father inquiringly in the face.

"Where are you going, Samuel?" Mr. Harman asked in a voice that sounded mournful to the ear of the son.

"Nowhere in particular," was the answer in a respectful tone.

"Then, if you have no particular reason for going out, Samnel, why not stay at home? there is danger abroad, my child."

The son laid down his hat and stood thoughtful for some moments: at length, as a tear fell upon his hand, he said in a voice that trembled—

"I know that I am almost breaking your hearts. I think about my conduct oftener than you imagine, and sometimes it seems as if these reflections would drive me crazy. But I am led on, it seems to me, at times, by an almost irresistible impulse."

"Only keep away from temptation, my child, and you are safe," the father said, going up and grasping the young man's hand.

"O yes, Samuel, do keep away from temptation!" the mother urged, coming to his side, and taking the other hand between both of her own.

The tears that gushed from the young man's eyes, were tears of heartfelt repentance.

"I could curse the man who opened that tavern!" he said with bitterness, as he grew calmer. "I have felt no inclination to drink since the house was closed two months ago. But the moment I saw the announcement that it would open yesterday, I

felt an almost irresistible desire to go there. With this desire I struggled all day. At night I was too weak to resist it. And much I fear, my dear parents, (and his voice trembled again, and was deeply pathetic and tender,) that I shall not be able to control the desire which at times comes over me. Were it not for your sakes, I feel that I should give up the contest without another effort. I do not care for myself. Indeed, it seems to me that the degraded life of a drunkard cannot make any one more miserable than will the struggle to which I shall be subjected, with this temptation daily before my eyes. I speak the truth when I say, that I wish that man had died before he came to this place to tempt men's souls to ruin."

"But, surely, Samuel, the successful struggle against such an evil desire, is worth all the pain of mind it may cost you," the old man said. "In good resolutions, when they flow down into an effort to resist what is wrong, there is always a power from heaven. And there is a power that must conquer, when, in the good resolution, there is trust in the Lord. Look up to Him, then, in your conscious weakness, and He will be your almighty strength. When you feel tempted, raise your thoughts to him in an acknowledgment of your own helplessness, and pray, 'Deliver us from evil,' and He will be present with you in that prayer, and give strength to support you. Try, my son, in this way; cast aside all confidence in yourself, and trust in Him who will ever be present to help you in your good resolutions."

The son did not reply, and there followed many minutes of oppressive silence. Then the mother retired from the room, and in a little while the father also, and the young man was left alone. He had been designed by his father to fill the same sacred office that he himself held—the office of minister. And he had been educated to that end—principally at home, and under the father's care. But for a year or so past, it had become too painfully apparent, that the moral tone of the young man's mind was becoming strangely perverted. He not only associated with low company, but frequented the tavern, and often drank to a state of partial intoxication.

When this fact became apparent to Mr. Harman, it inflicted a pang, the poignancy of which few can imagine. As to the mother, the shock seemed more than she could bear. For a time, remonstrance was tried, but it produced little effect. As the young

man's rational mind developed itself, it seemed that his evil propensities had become stronger, and his inclination to resist them less active. At times he would seem to make an earnest struggle against the current that was bearing him on to ruin, but the struggle was always brief, and unsuccessful. He was gradually growing more and more dissipated, more and more neglectful of his books, and more and more disinclined to look into those works of doctrine and religious precept, which formed a portion of his studies. The good old man, his father, was beginning to despair of his son, when the tavern-keeper moved, and the establishment was broken up. There being no other drinking house in the village, there was no other place of resort to tempt the idle and infatuated; and Samuel Harman became at once, apparently, a changed young man. He resumed his studies with an attention and assiduity, that made the hearts of his father and mother thrill again with hope. This he continued for two months, when W—— re-opened the house. The sequel is known.

A few brief sentences will tell the rest of this sad tale. After tea on the evening of the day succeeding that in which W—— opened the tavern, Samuel found means to go out unobserved by his parents. At eleven o'clock he was brought home drunk to helplessness and insensibility! On the next night the same thing occurred. And so on the next and the next.

On the morning of the fourth day the minister went over to see the tavern-keeper, and remonstrated with him.

"Mr. W——," he said, "I have a favor to ask of you. You have already refused me one, but do not refuse my present request."

"I shall not promise," W—— replied coldly, "but say on."

"My request is, then, that you will not sell my son any more liquor."

The tavern-keeper shook his head.

"I do not feel authorized," he replied, "to refuse any one who calls for liquor at my bar. My house is one of public entertainment, and I am, therefore, bound to entertain the public. Why, you might as well say that I should n't sell a man an axe, if I were keeping a store, because he might kill himself with it."

"You certainly should not sell it to him, if you knew he were going to kill himself with it. That is clear. Neither should you sell liquor to my son, when you know that he is destroying both

body and soul by the use of it. A druggist will not sell any one laudanum, unless he has conclusive evidence to his own mind that no improper use is going to be made of it. And yet, *you* will sell a poison that as surely destroys life as laudanum, though less rapidly, and you not only sell it to those who intend making an improper use of it, but encourage them to drink it in your very presence. Surely, sir, you do not reflect on what you are doing!"

W—— grew angry at this, and replied in so insulting a style to the old man, that he retired, hopeless of moving the landlord by any humane considerations.

The downward course of young Harman was rapid from this time forth. In six months he died of that dreadful disease, delirium tremens, his father and mother heart-broken witnesses of his last awful ravings and horrible fears.

But few days, and those full of troubles, passed, before they went down in sorrow to the grave.

"I saw," said W——, "both funeral processions pass my tavern. First, that of the son, and in a few months afterwards, that of the father and mother, both borne out at the same time, and laid side by side.

"'They have gone where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest,' said, with a sigh, one of the villagers, who had already become a daily frequenter of my tavern, as he came in from the door at which he had observed the passing funeral.

"I felt that there was more than the expression of a simple sentiment in what the man uttered. I was conscious, as he passed me by, and seated himself, in gloomy silence, that he was thinking of me—and that he was thinking of me as one of the wicked who had troubled that old man's peace. But I was not long held in suspense.

"'W——,' he said, suddenly, and with emphasis, 'I would not have on my conscience the sin of bringing that good old man's gray hairs in sorrow to the grave, for ten thousand worlds!'

"'Nor would I,' was my response; but my words seemed to choke me as I uttered them, and I felt strangely confused.

"'But the sin *is* on your conscience!' the man said, rising to

his feet, and coming up to me, his countenance expressing anger and pain. 'You have killed that good old man! You are his murderer, sir!'

"'I cannot, and I will not permit any one to use such language to me!' I replied, confronting him with a stern look.

"'You will have to permit it, in this instance at least,' was his cool answer, while he continued to look me steadily in the face. 'And remember,' he added, 'that it is the truth that accuses you, not I. Before you came here and opened this accursed place, Samuel Harman had been tempted with liquor, and had fallen. But the man who had tempted him went away, and then he was himself again, and did not seem to desire what had so well-nigh been his ruin. Hope had again began to spring up in the hearts of his parents, when, alas! some evil spirit sent you here with your mean, selfish love of gain, that would not hesitate to rob even the dead! That kind old man, so deeply beloved by all, remonstrated with you, but in vain. He might as well have spoken to the north wind! Your first victim was his beloved child. Then he begged that you would not sell liquor to that infatuated boy. But with a feeling that a devil might have envied, you still held the cup to his lips! At last the boy died—and do you think, sir, that you were not his murderer? If ever a man was guilty of the blood of another, you are guilty of the blood of that boy! And not of his only, but the blood of his parents clings to the skirts of your garments!'

"The man paused, and I was too excited with anger to reply before he resumed.

"'Think, sir, for one moment,' he said, 'how lost to every humane emotion you must be, when you can, day after day, mix your poisons for the souls and bodies of men, and hand it out to your deluded victims, with your smiles and gentle words, even while you are conscious that many of them are fast losing all power over themselves. Do not imagine, sir, that you are guiltless in regard to these men! Their blood will yet rise up and curse you! The day will come, in this world, or in the next, when you will reap the whirlwind. And now, sir, we part for ever. From this hour I am a free man—from this hour, I neither touch, taste, nor handle the unclean thing! Others may dally with the serpent whose fangs are just ready to penetrate their vitals—others may encourage by inducements and example,

the weak ones around them to sin, but I will be guiltless of so dreadful a crime.'

"And thus saying, with a calm energy that subdued the storm of passion pent up within my bosom, the man, who had been among my best customers, turned away, and slowly left my house. His feet never again crossed the threshold of my tavern.

"It would be doing injustice to myself were I to say, that I felt altogether indifferent about the death of the minister, his wife and son. Nor could I drive from my mind the painful consciousness that I was too deeply involved in the guilt of their premature removal under circumstances of so much pain. For a time, there was a struggle in my mind between a perception that I was doing wrong to tempt my neighbors, and a selfish love of gain. But my selfishness prevailed, and then I went on again, calmly, in the course I had already chosen with deliberation. But, in my case, at least—I cannot speak for others—there was always occurring something to bring up distinctly before my mind, a sense of the evil I was doing in society. The current of my life did not run smoothly on, notwithstanding I was gradually accumulating this world's goods. I am sure, that the aggregate of unhappiness which I suffered while a tavern-keeper, consequent upon the evil growing out of my sales of intoxicating liquors, overbalanced a hundred times all the delight I experienced from a gratified love of gain. A far happier man would I have been as a poor, industrious mechanic, seeking my pillow, nightly, with a quiet mind, than I have been as a seller of liquid poison, with the fearful burden of ruined souls upon my conscience. Ah, sir! when I recall the past, I feel that it is almost vain for me to rest any hope upon the future. It seems as if I had sinned past forgiveness. How can I meet my victims in the next world? Is not that a fearful thought!"

And the tavern-keeper shuddered and grew pale.

"But to proceed with my story that I now regret having begun. I was fondly attached to my oldest boy, then about twelve years of age, and took great pains to have him well educated. He was a beautiful boy—mild in disposition and intelligent. I had two children beside, a boy and a girl, and I loved them very much. There was a man who was engaged in hauling stone past my tavern, who stopped to get a dram every time he was on his way by. Sometimes the children would climb up

into his cart, while he was in the bar getting a drink, but as his horse was gentle, I paid little attention to them, not apprehending any danger.

"One day while I was in town, this man came past as usual, and as usual stopped to get some liquor. It so happened that my eldest child was home from school, and was amusing himself with two or three playmates. The moment the driver went into the tavern, they, with my youngest boy, eight years old, got into the cart and commenced hallooing to the horse. The animal started off, and the children set up a loud cry of alarm. When the driver came out he saw the horse dashing off at full speed and instantly started in pursuit. But before he could overtake him, the cart was upset, and my youngest boy killed instantly! The elder had fallen out before. His mother came up to him while the driver pursued the horse, and lifting him in her arms, found that his back was broken.

"Something troubled me as I returned from the city on that day. The nearer I drew towards home, the more uneasy did I become. It was in vain that I strove to shake off the gloomy impression that had taken possession of my mind, it grew more and more painful the nearer I came to the village. At last I entered my house, to find my vague fears terribly realized. There was my youngest boy, dead, his tender body torn and bruised and broken—and there was my eldest, upon whom I had so often looked with pride, screaming in pain, and shockingly disfigured. But if I suffered, how was the heart of their poor mother riven with anguish!

"Strange as it may seem, not one of the three children who were in the cart with my own, was injured. On the next day we buried our little one out of our sight. But the disfigured body of the other was ever before our eyes, and for a long, long time, the memory of his groans and cries of pain in our ears. Neither my wife nor myself felt again happy in the village of ——, and in a few months after, we removed to the city, where I opened a larger and more attractive drinking house in —— street. Here I remained for fifteen years, gradually accumulating money, and added house to house and lot to lot.

"Many a sad tale could I tell you, of young men who during that time, have frequented my house. I will not say that I ruined them, or even that I taught them to drink. They came,

most of them, to my house after the taste had been formed; but this much I did, I used every means in my power to allure them to my house, and to make them feel pleasant while there. That I was accessory to their ruin, I cannot deny.

"There was young P——, you know him no doubt. He was the youngest son of P——, the wealthy shipping merchant. His father gave him of course, the very best education. No young man I am sure ever commenced the world with fairer prospects than he did. He was a lawyer, you remember. Well, when he was admitted to the bar, and argued his first case, the whole court-room was electrified with the sudden burst of powerful eloquence that he poured forth. It was not, I have heard it said, a mere declamatory appeal, but a soundly rational argument that he presented, clothed with a richness of language, that made it irresistible. On that very night he came to my house, with half a dozen companions, flushed with the excitement of success, and before ten o'clock had drunk to intoxication.

"'What a pity!' remarked an elderly man, leaning against the counter, and sipping his brandy and water.

"'Indeed it is!' I said in a tone of assumed pity. 'But this is only a little frolic. He will sow his wild oats, by and by.'

"'I hope so,' was the response, in a half concerned tone, and then he walked away.

"From this time forth, there were few evenings that young P—— did not come to my tavern. But it was some years before his habits made any apparent impression on his prospects. At last it was not to be concealed, even from his most indulgent friends, that the light of a strong intellect was growing dim; that the promise of early years was fading. Then came the remonstrances of those who could venture to remonstrate—the persuasions and gentler efforts of parents and sisters, but alas! all was vain. The ardor of an insatiable desire, was more potent than the strongest reason, or the most tender allurements. Down, down, down, slowly, but regularly, step by step, did he go, and at last sunk to the grave in the bloom of manhood, the few green laurels that he had won, already faded upon his brow!

"Is it not a fearful thing to trifle with intoxicating drinks? Who can tell the moment when the equilibrium of his mind will be destroyed—the moment when the power to refrain from the cup of confusion will leave him. It has left, and is still leaving,

hundreds, daily, who but a week before would laugh at your suggestion of danger. And when this equilibrium is destroyed, with what a fatal energy, despite the highest, the holiest, the tenderest considerations, does the victim go on his downward way? Since I have abandoned the wicked traffic, and have been able to look at these things, free from the selfishness that had for years beclouded my mind, I experience such an overpowering solicitude for those who are venturing on the enchanted ground, that I feel as if I could lift my voice and cry, 'beware!' at the corners of every street. But to proceed with my rambling narrative.

"I can count up fifty or sixty young men, the flower of our city, who have been ruined by drink. There is scarcely a family of any distinction among us, into which the destroyer has not entered at some point. Scarcely a mother's heart that has not trembled with fear, or been wrung with the keenest anguish. And who is responsible for these things? For there is responsibility somewhere. Great evils like these are not the result of chance. I point with confidence, to two classes in society, and am bound to consider them responsible. These two classes are the distillers and the venders of intoxicating liquors. I, as one of the latter class, feel that I have my weight of responsibility to bear, and a fearful one, I am conscious, that it is. But I must bear it, and so must all who are now, or have been, engaged in the traffic.

"There are but two circumstances more to which I shall allude, and those two are to me, the most painful of any that I have related. I told you that my eldest boy, a promising lad, was crippled by a fall from a cart, while the driver was drinking at my bar-room. It was a long time before he was able to get about, and then he was, to all eyes but those of his parents, a loathsome object. Not only was his body disfigured, but his countenance, once regular and beautiful in contour and expression, became distorted and painful to look upon. His disposition, too, was changed. From a cheerful, generous, light-hearted boy, he became fretful, self-willed and envious. Occasionally, before his fall, he would go to the bar, and draw for himself a glass of cider, or beer, but he did not seem to have any particular love for liquor. After he was able to go about the house again, there were for him, of course, fewer sources of amusement, and he resorted more regularly, as a kind of relief to the moping monoto-

ny of his life, to the bar. I took no notice of this, until his mother said to me one day:

"'I'm afraid that John goes to the bar too often.'

"'I reckon not, Ann,' I replied. 'I haven't noticed any thing wrong in that respect.'

"'I have, then, Thomas. Of late I've noticed that he mixes brandy and water half a dozen times a day.'

"'Is it possible? I must put a stop to that,' I replied in alarm—the idea of my crippled child becoming a drunkard, presenting itself with painful and revolting distinctness.

"But I found it no easy thing to do so. The objects of temptation were around him, and the appetite already formed. Threats, remonstrance, persuasion, punishment, were all in vain. If not allowed to drink openly, he would do so by stealth. If I had not been a tavern-keeper, I might have prevented his obtaining liquor until his desire for it had passed away; but, with the temptation ever before his eyes, and the fumes of the bewitching draught ever in his nostrils, I found that to prevent his drinking was impossible.

"At the age of sixteen, it was no uncommon thing for me to see him carried off to bed, in the middle of the day, drunk and insensible. At twenty, he was a loathsome object even to my eyes. All natural affection for him retired from my bosom, and I would have spurned him from the house, had it not been for his mother and sister, whose affection seemed to cling closer and closer to the unhappy and debased object they still looked upon as a child and a brother. At the age of twenty-two he died. Let me draw a veil over the last scene. I would forget it."

The tavern-keeper's voice here fell to a low and mournful tone. Leaning his head upon his hand, and shading his eyes, he sat silent for a long time. Then rousing himself with an effort, he resumed:

"For years before he died, he had not seemed to me as a child. But when the spirit had fled—when I saw him pale, cold, and insensible in his coffin, then the obstructed waters rushed over my soul, and overwhelmed me. Ah, sir! it would be a vain effort for me to attempt to make you conscious of my feelings, when I looked my last look, ere the coffin-lid passed over his face for ever. I felt that he was my child then. And worse—that I had been the serpent in his path—that I had cursed my first-born, and sent him marred in body and soul to an early grave!

"But let me hasten on. After my child passed away from my sight, I felt that now I must have quiet; that everything would go on as smoothly as the waters of a pleasant stream. Ellen, my daughter, had sprung up to womanhood, with a spirit as gentle as that of the mother who had borne her. There was nothing about her that did not inspire affection. No expense had been spared in her education, and, waiving all a parent's fond partiality, I can say, that few were more intelligent and accomplished than she was.

"'Mr. W——, said a young man to me one day, who had occasionally visited my bar, and whose habits I knew pretty well, 'I should be glad of a little private conversation with you.'

"There was something singular and embarrassing in his manner, and I instantly suspected why he wished to converse with me.

"'Upon what subject do you wish to converse?' I asked coldly.

"'About your daughter, Ellen,' he said, in a hesitating whisper.

"'I do not wish to converse with *you* on that subject, was my stern response.

"The young man turned hastily away and left me.

"'Here comes more trouble!' I muttered between my teeth, with bitter emphasis.

"When I went home to dinner, I narrowly observed the expression of Ellen's countenance. I could not mistake its concerned import. It was too painfully evident to my mind, that she had not only been countenancing the young man's attentions, but had consented that he should approach me with an offer for her hand.

"'Ann,' said I to my wife, after we were alone, for Ellen did not sit long at the table, and could not, I saw, eat anything—'has Joseph Hilton been in the habit of visiting Ellen?'

"'Why, yes,' she replied, slightly embarrassed—'he has visited here quite regularly of late.'

"'And did you know of his intention to ask for Ellen's hand?'

"'Not until yesterday, when Ellen told me of his offer.'

"'Here is more trouble!' I said, rising from the table, and pacing the room backwards and forwards.

"'How so?' inquired my wife. 'Is not Joseph Hilton of a good family, and himself an estimable young man?'

"'There is no doubt as to the respectability of the connection so far as his family is concerned; but, Ann, you would not wish to see your child a drunkard's wife!'

"'Merciful heavens!' she ejaculated, clasping her hands together, and rising quickly to her feet. 'A drunkard's wife! I would a thousand times rather see her laid in her grave.'

"'Then, Ann, if she marries Joseph Hilton, she will be that heart-broken thing. I have come to have a quick eye in these matters. I can tell long before his nearest friends discover it, when a young man has passed the point of self-control: and that point Hilton passed many months ago.'

"A long and painful silence followed. At last I said—

"'Do you think it will be a hard matter to convince Ellen that this young man is unworthy of her?'

"'I am afraid it will,' my wife replied. 'He has never exhibited, while here, the slightest indication of being under the influence of liquor, and it will, therefore, be difficult to convince Ellen that, on this point there is any real objection to the young man. And if, as I have every reason to believe, she is strongly attached to him, I need not tell you how vain all remonstrance may be, even were she to see him intoxicated.'

"'Vain all remonstrance!' I ejaculated, my feelings much excited and indignant. 'I tell you, Ann, she shall *not* marry him! I had rather see her dead first!'

"'Do not get excited about it, Thomas,' my wife said in a mournful tone. 'Any thing rash, any very apparently decided step on our part, may confirm her affection for him beyond the power of change. Especially, if we attempt to disparage him utterly, will there be great danger. She sees him only with the partial eye of affection, and cannot be induced to think unfavorably of him.'

"'What, then, is to be done?' I asked, in a calmer tone.

"'I cannot tell,' was my wife's sad reply. 'You are certain that Hilton is all you fear him to be?'

"'Certain! Ann, I cannot be mistaken in a matter like this, and what is worse, when under the influence of liquor he is ill-tempered and quarrelsome. I shudder when I think of our Ellen as the wife of such a man. There would not only be

neglect and crushed affections, but ill treatment and intense suffering. You have seen many a drunkard's wife, Ann; I need not describe their miserable, heart-breaking condition.'

"A gush of tears attested the vividness of some picture of suffering upon my wife's imagination. To her I left the task of effecting, if possible, a change in Ellen's feelings towards the young man. But all her efforts were in vain. She would not believe, even though assured that I had often seen him partially intoxicated, that Hilton drank to excess.

"'But he drinks moderately, Ellen: let us assume that as a fact which you will readily admit,' my wife urged upon our daughter.

"'I have no doubt of that,' was her reply—'all young men do so, I believe. I know that father does, and has done so ever since I can remember, and he is not a drunkard.'

"'But still, Ellen, there is great danger of every young man who drinks becoming a drunkard. Hilton, your father says, has often been in his bar-room in a state of partial intoxication.'

"'And did he sell him liquor when he knew that he was in so much danger? I cannot understand that, mother.'

"'You should not allude to your father in that way, Ellen,' my wife replied gravely.

"'Whether I speak of it or not, mother, it still seems as strange to me. If it is wrong for young men to drink—if, in drinking, there is so much danger, is it not wrong for father to sell liquor?'

"'That is not to the point, my child; the question now is, whether you will cast off this young man, or become a drunkard's wife.'

"'I cannot see it in that light; I am not afraid that Joseph Hilton will ever become a drunkard.'

"'I am sorry that you seem thus disposed to follow your own inclinations, Ellen, rather than be guided, in a matter of so much importance, by your parents. Much as we regret to do so—much as it may pain us to cross you in any thing, we must, from this time forth, positively prohibit that young man from visiting you.'

"This declaration was met, of course, by a flood of tears. For a week or two there was a gloomy shadow resting over our dwelling. It was painfully evident that the impression on Ellen's

mind was too deep to be easily, if at all, erased. After a while, however, there was a change in her manner; she seemed less borne down; although there was about her no expression of cheerfulness. At this I began to take hope.

"'She is rising above her weakness,' I said to myself—'she will yet be able to cast his image from her mind as something unworthy.'

"Thus I congratulated myself at the very moment when the calmness around only preceded the coming tempest. On the night following this very self-congratulation at the passing away of a danger that threatened shipwreck to our peace, I came home from my bar-room about half-past ten o'clock.

"'Has Ellen gone to bed?' I asked, looking around and missing her familiar form.

"'No, she has not come home yet, and I begin to feel uneasy about her.'

"'Where did she go?' I asked, an instinctive feeling of alarm arising in my mind.

"'She said that she was going to spend the evening at Mrs. Allen's, and I have just sent over to see if she is there.'

"At that moment the servant came in with the information that Ellen was not there, nor had been during the evening.

"'Where *can* she be?' ejaculated my wife.

"'Do you know whether she has ever met that young man since I forbade him the house?' I inquired, with assumed calmness.

"'She has not, to my knowledge.'

"'Do you know, Harriet?' I said, sternly, turning to the servant.

"'I believe she has, sir,' was the hesitating reply.

"'Did you take a bundle to any place for her to-day?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'Where did you take it?'

"'To—to—to Mrs. Power's.'

"I waited to hear no more, but, putting on my hat strode from the house, and in a few minutes was pulling with a nervous jerk, the door bell of Mrs. Power's dwelling.

"'Can I see Mrs. Power?' I asked, in an excited tone, of the servant who came to the door.

"'She has gone to bed,' was the reply.

"'Ask her, then, if she knows where Ellen W—— is?'

"'O, sir,' the servant replied, with a broad smile, 'she was married this evening to Mr. Hilton, and has gone out to Ellicott's Mills.'

"I said not a word in reply, but turned away feeling as weak as a child. It seemed as if I had been stunned by a powerful blow. Slowly did I walk towards my house, that seemed, now, a cheerless spot, since the bright light that had given to it a life and a joy was gone—and gone, as a ray of sunshine, I felt, for ever.

"'Oh, sir, you cannot imagine the feelings of a father who loves his child tenderly, under a trial like this. My anger, which had burned, in anticipation of such an event, was all gone; and I felt something like we feel towards one who is dead.

"'You will not cast her off?' my wife said, after I had communicated the painful intelligence, with a tender, appealing look, while the tears fell like rain from her eyes.

"'Cast her off, Ann?' I replied,—'O no! More than ever now does she require our kindest care. We must not shut our eyes to the fact that her husband cannot make her happy. We must not flatter ourselves with the hope that he will pause in the downward road that he has taken. I am fearfully conscious, that there is nothing to hope. Ellen will be a drunkard's wife, and will have her cup filled with gall and wormwood.'

"My head pressed a sleepless pillow that night. In the morning, I went with my wife early to Ellicott's Mills in search of our fugitive child. I found her and her newly constituted husband, and we received them kindly, much to their relief. As soon as I could get the young man alone, I explained to him fully, that my only objection to him was the fact of his drinking, and warned him of his danger, while I conjured him to give up the use of all kinds of liquor. He confessed his weakness, and promised faithfully to abandon the use of strong drinks.

"Against my wish the young couple went to housekeeping. I furnished them out in handsome style, and they commenced the world under promising auspices. For a time Ellen's face wore its usual happy aspect. But after the passage of a few months, I could detect something musing and dreamy in the expression of her eye. She did not smile as often; and when she did smile, the light faded more quickly away.

"'I'm afraid something is wrong,' I said to my wife. 'I am sure Ellen is not happy.'

"'So it seems to me. But when I allude to it, she says that it is only my imagination—that she is happy,' was her reply.

"But I was not satisfied. And soon my fears were confirmed. Two or three days had passed since Ellen had been round to our house, when I proposed one evening that we should go and see her. Much to our surprise and pain, we found her with her eyes red and swollen, as if from weeping, and her whole appearance indicating deep distress. The moment she saw us, there was an evident effort on the part of Ellen to rally her feelings and assume a cheerful air. But the effort was vain.

"'Ellen, child, what ails you?' her mother asked, in an earnest tone.

"'O nothing,' was her reply.

"'Something must be the matter, Ellen, or you would not look so troubled. Tell us freely of anything that gives you pain, my child,' I urged tenderly. 'Let there be no concealments with your parents.'

"'Indeed, father, it is nothing of much consequence. I know that I am weak and foolish,' she said. But the gush of tears that followed, told too plainly that there was something wrong, and that of no light character.

"'Where is Joseph?' I asked, after her feelings had grown a little calmer.

"She hesitated a moment, and then said that he was up stairs. That he was not very well, and had retired to bed.

"'I must know the worst, Ellen,' I said, rising and taking up a light, with which I proceeded to her chamber. One look was sufficient to tell me that her husband was sleeping in drunken insensibility! And it was only six months since they were married!

"You must go home with us, Ellen,' I said, in a sad, but decided tone, as I came down stairs.

"'When?' she asked, looking up eagerly into my face.

"'To-night, Ellen,' was my firm reply.

"'And leave him here? O, no, I cannot do that, father!'

"'You must not stay with him to-night, alone, Ellen.'

"'Why not, father?' and as she asked this question, she looked me inquiringly in the face, as if fearful that my reason involved what she dreaded I should know.

"'Because I do not think it safe for you to be left alone with him in his present condition.'

"'He will not hurt me, father,' she replied, with a forced, sad smile.

"'Hurt you, Ellen!' I responded, with something of excitement in my tone. 'It would not be well for him to do so. But come, you had better go home with us.'

"'No, father, I cannot go,' was her decided reply.

"'Then we will have to stay here with you.'

"'Indeed, father, there is no necessity for you doing that. I am not at all afraid.'

"But I insisted upon doing so, and consequently we remained all night in the house. It was, I think, about three o'clock in the morning, that I was awakened by a noise in the adjoining chamber, where my daughter and her husband slept.

"I was out of bed instantly, and had partly dressed myself, when I heard Ellen say, in a low, imploring tone:—

"'O, do n't, do n't, do n't, Joseph!' at the same time that the sound of two or three blows came distinctly upon my ear.

"It seemed, sir, in that moment, as if I were on fire. I sprang into their chamber with a fierce energy of hate towards Hilton, such as never before or since burned in my veins for any one. I found my daughter standing on the floor, with one hand of her husband entangled in her hair, while with the other he was brandishing a stick over her head, his face flushed, his eyes starting wildly from his head; and every action and expression indicating a madman. With one powerful blow I knocked him senseless to the floor. That blow seemed to take equal effect upon Ellen, for she fell likewise, and lay in a state of apparent lifelessness.

"As soon as the day dawned, at which time Hilton was perfectly sober, and Ellen had recovered from her fainting fit, I removed her to my house; forbidding, as I did so, her husband ever to cross its threshold. Of course my child was not happy under this state of separation, and soon left us to join her husband, whose penitence deceived her into the belief that all would be well again.

"On the night that her first child was born, Hilton came home drunk, and crazy, as he always was when intoxicated. It was with the utmost difficulty that we could keep him from dragging Ellen out of bed, so strangely bitter were his feelings to-

wards her when thus excited. The agitation which was the consequence, had like to have cost her her life, and I have often, since, had a strange involuntary wish that she had then died.

"I cannot dwell upon her sufferings and our trials for the next five years, during which she continued to live with her husband. At the end of that time, we prevailed upon her to come home, with her three children, and she once more entered our house a pale, emaciated, heart-broken creature, and moved before our eyes daily, a living evidence of the horrors involved in, and consequent upon, the traffic in which I was engaged. And she still lives, and her husband still lives, a perpetual source of trouble to her. Sometimes he will quit drinking for a few weeks, and make almost daily overtures to her for a reconciliation. Sometimes he will threaten to get possession of his children by law, and once or twice has attempted to pick them up in the street and carry them off. Poor creature! her existence is a living death.

"With all these things daily before my eyes, with my own heart burdened and oppressed, I regarded not others. I had a strange indifference to the sufferings of all the rest of mankind. Daily did I gather in the substance drawn from neglected wives and suffering children, and hoard it away without a pang. My conscience was well-nigh seared as with a hot iron. But the shock came at last—the power of that Divine Book had in it a virtue to awaken remorse that resided in no dispensation, not even the most afflictive that ever reached me.

"In looking back upon my life for the last twenty years," he remarked to me, near the close of our interview, 'I ask myself, sometimes, what I have gained by way of compensation, for all that I have been compelled to sacrifice. A few thousands of dollars make up the sum of that gain. A few thousands! How freely would I scatter them to the winds, could such a sacrifice recall the bloom to the cheek of my daughter—or restore to me the children, in moral and physical health, who have perished so terribly. Nor is this all. When the secrets of the grave are revealed, then only can be known how much of moral degradation, of sorrow and pain, and intense suffering, the wealth of a tavern keeper has cost. A fearful price, is it not? I sometimes wish that I had died before I was induced to open a shop for the sale of intoxicating drinks."

"You do not always feel so badly?" I said.

"Not always. I could not stand it long if I did. The fact of looking back and reviewing my life had excited my feelings a good deal. But I feel bad enough at any time, even though I assume a cheerful exterior—even though some call mine a happy countenance. How could it be otherwise?"

Truly, how could it be otherwise? It seems to me, that if there is one curse of a man's existence greater than another, it must be the remembrance of having put the cup of confusion to the lips of his brother, and caused that brother to fall.

Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him and makest him drunken.—HAB. ii. 15.

THE DRUNKARD'S WIFE.

"THINK of your wives and little ones!" said the President, while making one of his stirring appeals to the crowd that filled the hall at which meetings of the Washingtonians were held. "Think of the pale, care-worn face of her you promised, many years ago, to love and to cherish! Think of the dear ones whose young and innocent affections once twined about your heart, and whose glad voices once rung in your ears like tones of sweetest music! Think of these, I say,—think of them, unhappy man! who hast betrayed thy trust: who hast broken thy solemn vow made at God's altar, and crushed the hopes of her who there confided her all of life to thy keeping! Would that I had the power to restore to your heart some touches of that deep tenderness which once pervaded it, when wife and children were named! then would I feel sure that you would not leave this room to-night without pledging yourself never again to taste the accursed cup, that has robbed you of every true emotion towards those who were once so fondly loved—and robbed them of happiness,—I had almost said, of hope. Come, my friend! Let me reason with you. Is it well for you thus to destroy the peace of those who love you—to bring shame and sorrow to your wife, to beggar your children? and all for a low, selfish, sensual gratification? With all this persevering self-indulgence, are you as happy as you once were? Are the sacred attachments of home —the endearments, the tenderness, the confiding devotion of that hallowed spot, to be compared with that wild delirium of intoxication? I can hear your emphatic *No!* Come then, and go with us! We will do you good! Come! and there shall be light again in your dwelling. Come! and the smile shall return to the lips, and joy to the heart of that being who has clung to you, changed and degraded as you are, with an affection that nothing could obliterate."

A long, deep silence followed this appeal, broken at intervals by the President's earnest and emphatic,

"Come!—Come along, and we will do you good!"

"Look at Dr. Harper," I heard some one near me say, in a low, deep whisper.

I turned my eyes towards the individual who had been named, and saw that tears were streaming from his eyes, and that his face was agitated by powerful emotions. The President's appeal had touched his feelings. His thoughts were, evidently, with the almost broken-hearted, neglected, suffering wife, who had clung to him through long years of sorrow and privation. For a few moments there seemed to be an air of irresolution about him. Once or twice he made a movement to rise, but still hesitated. There was plainly, a strong conflict going on between shame and the power of an evil habit, and the clear convictions of right that were presenting themselves to his mind. At last he arose and went deliberately up to the secretary's table, and subscribed his name to the pledge. How my heart glowed with pleasure as I witnessed this act! Involuntarily did my thoughts turn to his wife, whom I met occasionally on the street, the mere shadow of her former self. Once the happy centre of a gay and happy circle—now, the lonely, neglected, sorrowing wife of a fallen drunkard! How like the awakening from a horrible dream, I thought, must be her husband's announcement, that he had freed himself from the one great evil, in which had been included all the rest that had cursed his own existence and hers! And thus it was to her. But let me not anticipate. The story of her married life, which I am about to offer the reader, is one of touching interest; yet involving scenes of strong and painful trial. How could it be otherwise, and she the wife of a drunkard? *A drunkard's wife!* What a world of misery is involved in those three words! Who can look at them without a sensation of icy coldness about the heart? But let me pass on to my narrative.

THE DRUNKARD'S WIFE.

"May your fond anticipations be more than realized, Grace," said old Mr. Atherton, laying his hand affectionately upon the head of his beautiful child. "Love your husband, and confide in him, for he is worthy of you. But love not your father the less."

"How can I ever love you less, my dear father?" Grace replied, looking up into his face with an expression of tenderness.

"I am sure you will not, Grace. I uttered but an idle word. Still, in parting with you thus, I cannot feel otherwise than moved at the separation. I cannot but feel that, although you will love me none the less, you will not think of me so often, nor look up to me for counsel and protection as you once did. Another will claim, and justly too, to be your protector and counsellor, and to have the *first* place in your affections. But I will not speak thus, for I see that it pains you. I feel that it is wrong."

And then followed a silence—painful in some slight degree, yet full of sweet emotions, playing in affectionate reciprocity from heart to heart, in parent and child.

To old Mr. Atherton, now well advanced in life, Grace was an only remaining child—the last of his household treasures. She had been to him for years a gentle spirit of love attending him on his way. Without her, he felt that life would be cheerless. With her, he had nothing more to desire. To yield her up then, to another was indeed a painful trial, notwithstanding he had the fullest confidence in him to whom he resigned his treasure. But it was resigning her—and there was the pang. And what was worse, she would remove with her husband, a young physician of fine talents and acquirements, from the city, to a small town some twenty miles distant.

Doctor Harper, the husband of Grace, was a young man of pure and elevated principles—superior in every way to the mass of those around him who were just entering upon life. And it was this, and this alone, that at all reconciled old Mr. Atherton to the necessity of parting with his child. He was conscious that it was only a feeling of selfishness that opposed this separation—that Grace must be, and would be happier with such a man for her husband, than as the companion of an old man, even though he were her father.

"I know you will be happy, Grace," he said, as he gave her a farewell kiss, a few days after her marriage. "Happier than I could make you. Go, then, and may heaven smile upon you and bless you!"

Under such flattering prospects opened the married life of Mrs. Harper. There were many who envied her lot—many who had looked upon the young, high-minded, talented physician, and

sighed for the place in his affections that was occupied by Grace Atherton.

"I have not attended a wedding for years, where the marriage-promise was so bright," remarked one.

"Nor I," was the response. "Doctor Harper is one of a thousand, and Grace is the sweetest girl of my acquaintance. Surely, no cloud can ever darken over them."

"None are free from affliction and misfortune," resumed the first speaker. "But these can never weigh them to the earth, for with her fond and innocent affections, united to his elevated principles, they have that within which will ever lift them above all external circumstances. Give to a married pair full confidence in each other's affection and rectitude of principle, and no affliction, no change of circumstances, can rob them of internal peace. They will rise in calm and rational superiority above them."

"That pure affection—that high-toned principle, as you justly say, are here united, and must produce the happy results described," was the reply.

The first five years of their married life passed away as might be supposed, in calm tranquillity of mind. Three sweet children blessed their union, and entwined about their hearts new and stronger cords of love. Let us introduce them to the reader more familiarly at this period. Doctor Harper's practice, as a physician, had become quite large, extending to almost all the wealthier families of the place, and widening into a circle of nearly ten miles round. Compelled to answer professional calls at all hours of the night, and at all seasons of the year, he was of course much exposed, and often much fatigued. The hospitality of those days, tendered wine or brandy, with an ill-advised, but sincere spirit of kindness, to all male visitors; but more especially to the country physician. The consequence was, that whenever called beyond the precincts of the town, or at a late hour, or in inclement weather, brandy or wine was uniformly offered to Doctor Harper, and as uniformly accepted. Its present effects were always reviving after a long ride through the bitter cold of winter, or the intense heat of summer, or after having been aroused from sleep at midnight. Of danger, he did not, of course, dream. Then strong drink was not known as the seeming friend that woos and delights until it has gained power and influence, when it unmasks itself, and proves the bitterest

and most subtle enemy that man has to contend with. He looked upon it as a good, and used it as such.

It was a very cold morning in the winter of 18—, that Doctor Harper received a hurried call to go five miles into the country. The snow was deep, and the wind blew in chilly gusts from the north-west.

"Must you really go so far this bitter morning?" Grace said, with a look of tender concern, as his sleigh came around to the door, and he began to prepare himself for his visit.

"Yes, dear. A physician's duties, you know, cannot be evaded. Others may put off until to-morrow, but we dare not."

"True, true. But I feel troubled, I cannot tell why, when I think of your going so far, and the air so intensely cold. You will wrap yourself up warm, dear."

"There is no reason why you should feel troubled, Grace. I have often been out on even colder days and nights. Do n't be uneasy—I shall do well enough," and he kissed her still young and glowing cheek.

"How soon will you be home?" the wife asked, after a pause.

"Not before evening, I think," was the reply.

"It will not take you all that time to attend to this call."

"No; but I have two or three others to make out of town, and shall cross over the country instead of coming back; but I shall be safely home towards evening. And now, give me a good strong glass of brandy and water. I shall need it."

There were no doubts or misgivings in the heart of the young wife, as she poured out a large portion of strong French brandy, and handed it to her husband, who drank it off at a single draught.

This done, he kissed her again, and then jumping into his sleigh, dashed off merrily, and was soon out of sight.

In spite of every effort to shake it off, Mrs. Harper felt uneasy through the whole day, and that uneasiness was connected with her husband. But her fears were all undefined. She knew of no danger that beset his path. The coldness of the day, she was satisfied, as she pondered that reason, was not the true cause—for she knew that he was well protected, and was, moreover, accustomed to such exposure.

Meanwhile, the Doctor proceeded on his journey, and was at the house of his patient within an hour after he left home.

"We are really indebted for your prompt visit, Doctor," said the gentleman who had sent for him, meeting him at the door, and grasping his hand warmly as he entered. "Come in! come in! it is a very cold morning, and you must be chilled through! Here, give me your cloak! Now take a good stiff glass of brandy, and then draw up to the fire and warm yourself."

The glass of brandy was poured out, and a large draught taken. And then the doctor warmed and composed himself before seeing his patient. The case was a critical one, requiring calm investigation and great skill. How far Doctor Harper was able to give both of these, after drinking so much brandy within an hour, we are not able to say. Perhaps it was not more than he could bear. Be that as it may, he spent one hour at the bedside of his patient, and then, after another fortifying glass, departed. The patient died that night.

He proceeded across the country about eight miles, to pay another visit. Here wine was set out for him, and he drank of it freely. This second patient disposed of, he drank again, and then took another circuit. Thus he continued until late in the afternoon, when, after having visited some four or five families, he turned homeward. At each house he drank as a matter of course. First, because liquor was placed before him, and he was expected to drink it; and second, because he felt inclined to drink, and believed that it would do him good.

As evening approached, Mrs. Harper felt her strange, unaccountable concern, increasing. At last the well-known sound of his sleigh-bells met her ear, and her heart bounded within her bosom as she sprung to the window, delighted at her husband's safe return.

"O, I am so glad you have come back," she said, laying her hand upon his arm as he entered. "I have felt all day long a strange uneasiness that I cannot account for—a concern for you. But you are safe home at last, and I have had all my foolish fears for nothing."

"You are a foolish girl sometimes, you know, Grace," he replied, stooping down and kissing her, with a rude familiar fondness, so unlike him, that Mrs. Harper looked up at him with an earnest yet doubting glance, while her heart sunk in her bosom, she knew not why. At that moment, his breath came strongly in her face. Almost every day she had perceived about him the

fumes of liquor, but this had caused her no alarm. She knew that he, like others, was in the habit of drinking moderately, and felt not the slightest apprehension in consequence. But now, there was something so disgusting in the odor of his breath, that she turned her head away with a sickening sensation, at the same time that she painfully realized the conviction that he was partially intoxicated! He—the husband she so loved and honored!

Mrs. Harper did not, for she could not, return his caresses; but shrunk away and busied herself about something that drew her from him. O, how wretched she felt! Not under the idea that her husband would become an abandoned drunkard—that fearful thought did not cross her mind—but because he had suffered the strong clear light of his reason to become dimmed—because he had fallen from his noble, manly character, and become degraded in intellect below the meanest of his kind. She felt that she could no longer regard him with the unalloyed pride and admiration, which had ever made him seem to her, unlike other men, above every human weakness or folly.

During the supper hour he talked almost incessantly; but all he said was mere drivelling nonsense, compared to his usual tone of conversation—so calm, so rational, so full of elevating reflections. The evening meal had always been to Mrs. Harper a pleasant season, for she loved to listen to her husband's remarks upon the incidents of the day, from all and each of which he drew some lesson of instruction. He was not a carping cynic, nor a dull, prosing moralizer—he did not lecture her upon her foibles, or assume a superior air, and give out his sentiments dictatorially; but in a kind familiar strain discoursed of men and things, of morals and manners, in a way so pleasing, that Mrs. Harper was never more delighted than when thus listening to him.

But how was all this changed on the evening to which we have just alluded! Instead of the simple and clear enunciation of some truth, or the forcible illustration of a sentiment; or some lively description, her husband spoke and acted like an insane man. Not a sentence could he utter coherently; nor think upon the same theme for more than a few moments at a time. O, how pained was the ear and oppressed the heart of his wife! It seemed almost impossible for her to believe that he who thus spoke was her husband!

For a time she almost seemed powerless, but thoughts of duty began to pass through her mind, and these roused her up.

"He must not be seen thus," she said. "He must not go out again to-night."

"Come," she said to him, as he rose from the supper-table, laying at the same time her hand upon his arm, and speaking in a tone of affectionate persuasion, "Come, Doctor, you are very much fatigued; had n't you better go to bed and get a good night's sleep?"

"Go to bed! Oh no, Grace, not now," he replied, positively. "What could have put that into your head? I am not fatigued —I never felt so fresh in my life. And, besides, have you forgotten that we promised to spend this evening with Mr. and Mrs. Mabury? There is to be company there, you know."

To this, poor Grace did not know what to reply. She could not say that she was indisposed, and therefore must stay at home, nor that she would not go. And as to telling her husband the true reason why she did not, of all things, wish to pay a visit to any one on that evening, that was out of the question. She merely said:

"I do not feel like going out to-night."

"Yes, but we must go. It would never do to stay away from Mr. Mabury's," her husband replied.

With a sinking heart, Mrs. Harper prepared herself to go out. She felt more like one going to a funeral, than to a pleasant party. But there was no escape. There was no form of argument in her power to use, that would have prevented her husband from doing as he wished.

It seemed to Mrs. Harper that the culprit awaiting his sentence could not feel worse than she did, as she paused with her husband at the door of Mr. Mabury's beautiful dwelling. That gentleman was one of the wealthiest, most influential and intelligent men of the town. Dr. Harper had always been one of his favorites, and he had always taken great pains to forward his interests. He was also a man of great firmness of character, and consistency of principle. Of all others, it was his house, into his presence, that Mrs. Harper most dreaded her husband to appear in his debased condition. But there was no remedy.

The rooms into which they entered, contained a select company, met for pleasant, social and intellectual intercourse.

"Good evening, Doctor!" said Mr. Mabury, as they came in, extending his hand at the same time with a frank cordiality—"I am very glad you have come. We were just discussing a point upon which your clear views on nearly all subjects will no doubt assist us."

And then, after one or two introductions took place, and a few formalities passed, Mr. Mabury proceeded to state the subject that had formed the theme of discussion to which he had alluded, while the Doctor listened with an effort to fix his attention to the different positions advanced. After Mr. Mabury had concluded, he proceeded very promptly, and at great length, to give his views. They were, of course, confused and incoherent; declaring to every one who heard him, that Doctor Harper was intoxicated! To the whole of his rambling arguments, his wife listened with feelings that few, if any, can imagine. On its conclusion, there was a deep, oppressive, and painful silence, the reason of which was too apparent to Mrs. Harper. No one attempted to reply, and the subject was at once dropped by the company. But this did not prevent Doctor Harper from further exposing himself. Talk he would, and talk he did, on all subjects. The consequence was, that, to every one the whole pleasure of the evening was lost, and the company retired at an unusually early hour, by a kind of common consent. All this Mrs. Harper saw—all this she felt. There was one thing Mr. Mabury did; or, rather, that he omitted to do, which may be worth mentioning as a hint to those who have not yet seen reason for abandoning altogether the use of liquors as an ordinary drink. Although a friend, much less a party of friends, never visited his house without being offered wine or brandy, yet that evening he denied all for the sake of one. He would not put the cup to Harper's lips, nor, by presenting it to others, tempt him again to touch it.

Before Doctor Harper and his wife reached home, he was a good deal sobered, and less inclined to talk. He was evidently becoming conscious of his condition—and conscious that he had degraded himself. Silent and thoughtful did he retire to his bed, where sleep soon locked up his senses. But to the eyelids of the distressed wife, the "sweet restorer" brought not, for hours, the calm, refreshing slumber that had for years been her nightly visitant. In vain did she strive to sink away into forgetfulness. That evening had been too full of strange, unlooked for inci-

dents, and she could not banish them from her mind. But at length, as the night waned, overwearied nature gave way, and she sunk into a troubled slumber, full of startling dreams.

It was long after daylight when she awoke from these, feeling weary and unrefreshed. Her husband had already risen and left the chamber. She soon followed, and found him in the breakfast room, reading. He did not look up as she entered, nor make any remark—he was evidently conscious, in some degree, of his condition during the previous evening. The morning meal passed with only a few general, constrained observations. Alas! how different from the usual conversational intercourse at the table, which had always been entered into so freely by Doctor Harper.

Here, then, were the first fruits of conscious degradation. The husband felt humbled in the presence of his own wife, and could not look her in the face with his usual calm, affectionate composure, nor speak to her so freely as he had been wont to do. Then came days of reserve, O, how painful to each! but exquisitely so to Mrs. Harper, for in that reserve were involved, in spite of all her efforts to overcome the feeling, diminished respect for, and confidence in, her husband. The being who had, in her eyes, seemed almost perfect, had fallen, and never again, she felt, could she look upon him, no matter how tenderly she might love him, as she had once looked.

At last this reserve, so painful to each, gradually wore off, and, externally, everything presented its usual aspect. But there were doubts and fears, and tremblings in the heart of the wife. Every time she saw her husband use wine or brandy, or any other intoxicating drink, she felt troubled. Formerly, she had sometimes taken wine with him at the dinner table, but now she always refused. This he felt as a tacit rebuke, and, as he had no idea of giving up its use entirely, but only to drink less freely, it annoyed him. Several times he was on the eve of mentioning the subject, but as he was conscious that he felt irritated, and would betray that irritation if he spoke, he remained silent. But, one day, after having drank rather freely during the morning, he said, as he handed the wine to Mrs. Harper, at the table,

"Come, Grace, you must take a glass of wine with me."

"Really, you will have to excuse me, dear," she replied, trying to smile, with a pleasant, indifferent air; "I don't think I feel well after taking wine."

"O, that is all nonsense. A little wine at dinner aids digestion. So come, let me fill your glass."

"Indeed, you must excuse me, Doctor," she said, more firmly. "I have made up my mind not to drink wine any more, except in case of sickness."

"And why not, pray?" Doctor Harper asked, in a voice louder than usual, and evidently excited.

"Because, dear, I do not think it does me any good," Mrs. Harper said, speaking in a mild, tender tone, and trying to smile.

"I think, madam, you might permit me to judge of that. As a physician I ought to know a little more about such matters than you do. Allow me, therefore, to say that a little wine at dinner *will* do you good."

"Madam!" That word! the first time he had ever used it in speaking to her—the tone in which it was uttered—O, how coldly it fell upon her heart!

"You may give me a little," was her only reply, as she held out her glass and looked up into his face with dimmed eyes.

He poured her the wine, and she drank it off, though it seemed as if it would strangle her, as she did so.

Doctor Harper felt and saw that he had wounded his wife by his words and manner. But he did not attempt to soothe her feelings.

Had his mind not been obscured by drink, this consciousness would have produced an immediate effort to restore her peace. Indeed had not such been his condition, he would never have violated it. But now, so he reasoned in his own mind, she had wantonly injured him by a reflection on his single instance of over-indulgence, under circumstances of a very peculiar nature. This he might have borne in another; but that his wife should act thus, seemed so unkind, and ungenerous, that he could not tolerate it. He therefore sat, during the meal, in moody silence.

At night, he came home, much more under the influence of liquor. He had been brooding all the afternoon over the incident which had thrown a cloud over them at the dinner table, and the more he thought of it, the more did he feel incensed at his wife.

"To think," he said to himself with indignant warmth, "that she should attempt such a thing with me, as if I were just on the eve of becoming a common drunkard! It is insufferable!"

With such feelings, and still more under the influence of

liquor, as has just been said, did Doctor Harper return home that evening. During the few hours which had passed since he went out, it seemed to his wife that she had endured a lifetime of misery. Like the sudden bursting of a fearful storm from a summer sky, the affliction, all unpreluded, had fallen upon her. A few weeks before, and all above and around was to her beauty and brightness. Now, everything was obscured, and dark, and foreboding.

With such feelings, did Mrs. Harper await anxiously the return of her husband. One glance at his face was sufficient to tell her, what his first word confirmed, that he was intoxicated. How her spirit shrunk within her as this painful truth became evident! The loving heart will hope even under the most unpromising circumstances. All through the afternoon, Mrs. Harper had cherished a belief, feeble though it was, that her husband would return home at night in a more rational state of mind. But this hope was at once dashed to the ground on his entrance. Her eager, inquiring look, the peculiar expression of her countenance, and the instant change that passed over it, attracted his attention, and, of course, irritated him.

"What do you mean by looking at me in that way?" he asked, in an angry tone of voice.

His wife did not reply, but turned away quickly, to hide her feelings, and left the room. They did not meet again until tea was announced. Then she appeared with a pale, distressed face, and eyes red and swollen. He observed her closely, but made no remark, until towards the close of the meal, when he said, abruptly—

"I am going to call on Mr. Mabury to-night, and wish you to go with me."

"Don't let us go there to-night, Doctor," Mrs. Harper instantly responded.

"And why not, pray?"

"I do not wish to go out to-night," she said evasively.

"O, yes, that is always the way!" her husband replied in a pettish tone, "you never care about going anywhere when I wish to pay a social visit."

"Indeed, indeed, you do me wrong!" Mrs. Harper said, earnestly, the tears coming to her eyes. "You know, dear, that I am always ready to go with you anywhere; and I would go to-night with you most cheerfully, only—"

But her heart failed her—she could not finish the sentence.

"Only what? Speak out plainly, madam!" he said drawing himself up, and looking steadily and sternly at her, for he half imagined the reason she was about to give.

But Mrs. Harper did not reply.

"Why don't you speak out, madam? Say!"

Still the wife was silent, and less inclined than ever to utter what a few moments before had trembled on her tongue.

"It's because you think I'm *too drunk* to go! That's the reason, madam. Speak out honestly and say yes!"

"I did n't say so, Doctor," was Mrs. Harper's calm reply, while she looked her husband earnestly in the face.

"O no, of course not!" he said in a sneering tone. "But you thought so, and to me there is no difference."

It is one of the phenomena of mind, that, as it enters into the most painful and agitating circumstances, it grows calm and collected. This Mrs. Harper experienced, and she was enabled to say in a firm voice:

"Doctor, I cannot conceal from myself, much as I desire to do so, the fact that you are not in a condition to go into company."

"And pray why not, madam?"

"Because you have been drinking too much."

"O yes, of course! I knew that was the reason. My wife has come to have sharper eyes than other people, and can discover her husband to be intoxicated where others can see no indications."

"You asked my reason for objecting to your going to Mr. Mabury's to night," Mrs. Harper replied, still in a calm voice, "and I have given it. Most certainly do I wish that it were not the true reason. Let me, then, beg of you, my dear husband, not to go out, and, especially, not to go to Mr. Mabury's. Trust in me, when I say that you are not in a fit condition to be seen abroad! Surely, your wife can have no selfish end to gain in thus urging you. Most gladly would she close her eyes to the painful truth, were it in her power."

As Mrs. Harper pleaded thus with him, she came to his side, and laid her hand, tenderly, upon his shoulder. But he turned away with an irritated air.

"Are you going with me, or not? Say yes, or no?" he said, a few minutes after, in a stern voice, looking his wife full in the face.

"If you wish me to go with you, I will go, of course," was the reply. "But I cannot feel that I would be doing right to you, without using every reason in my power to induce you to stay away. Had you seen the effect of your appearance and condition on Mr. Mabury and his company, as I saw, on the evening of your last visit, you would not dream of going to-night. Every one's enjoyment was marred, and I felt as if I would gladly have shrunk into nothingness. Do not, then, expose yourself again, nor throw upon your wife, who loves you, a burden so hard to bear! If all this seems strange to you, think why it is that Mr. Mabury sent for Doctor Elwell last week, to attend his little girl. There must be some good reason why he did not call you in."

This brought Doctor Harper to his feet with a look of surprise, concern, and mortification on his countenance.

"You are trifling with me, Grace!" he said, in a voice which showed that the last remark of his wife, had, in part, sobered him.

"I am not, Doctor. I would have mentioned this before, but could not find the heart to do so. Last week his little girl was taken down with scarlet fever, and Doctor Elwell was immediately sent for, and has been in attendance ever since. She has been very ill, but is now considered out of danger. Can you imagine any reason for this withdrawel of the implicit confidence heretofore placed in you by Mr. Mabury?"

Doctor Harper did not reply but commenced pacing the room backwards and forwards, with hasty steps.

"I have performed a painful duty—how painful, no heart but mine can ever know—and now my lips must be sealed in silence. It is a dangerous and doubtful position, that, in which a wife becomes the censor of the husband!" Mrs. Harper said as she entered her chamber, and threw herself, in tears, upon the bed.

For hours, Doctor Harper continued to pace the floor, every moment becoming more and more sobered, and more and more painfully conscious of his true position.

"I am disgraced! miserably disgraced!" he said, as he paused at last, and sunk into a chair, where he sat, still in painful thought, for a long time.

When he at last retired, towards midnight, to his chamber, he found his wife lying across the bed in a deep slumber.

"How heavy a burden I have laid upon thy heart, poor Grace!" he said, stooping down and pressing his lips to her forehead. As he stood, for some moments, still bending over her, she opened her eyes and looked up into his face.

"Dear husband!" she murmured, "will you still love me, and speak kindly to me?"

"I will, I will, Grace!" he replied, quickly, with emotion. "And now, let us try and forget the past. The future is yet full of happiness and hope."

Thus were they reconciled, after the first open breach; and there came days, and weeks, and months of confidence to the heart of Mrs. Harper. The lesson which her husband had received, she hoped would be sufficient ever after to put him on his guard. But the sunshine of her heart was not that mild, cheerful light, which had for years beamed upon it. The effects of the storm which, though but for a brief period, had desolated her breast, could not be obliterated. The pride she had felt in her husband's stainless reputation, and in the almost unlimited confidence which had been placed in him, had given way to a feeling nearly allied to shame. She cared not to go into company, and when in society, felt humbled on account of the weakness which had overtaken him.

As for Doctor Harper, the withdrawal of Mr. Mabury's confidence and support wounded him deeply. That gentleman continued to meet him with kindness and attention, and to respect him as a man of eminent talents and superior acquirements. But he dare not trust one whom he had seen intoxicated, with the health and life of his family.

"How can I know," he reasoned with himself, while deciding his course of action in reference to a change, "that the very moment he is called upon to prescribe for some member of my family, dangerously ill, he may not be so much under the influence of liquor as to have his perceptions obscured? The risk is too great; I cannot meet it."

Of course the fact that Mr. Mabury had changed his physician, and the reason of it, could not long remain a secret.

A few friends followed his example, and, as the reason of their change became known, others acted in like manner; so that at the end of six months, Doctor Harper had lost nearly every important family in the town of ———.

Conscious of the reason of this, and deeply mortified at it, he yet did not resolve utterly to abandon the fatal cup that had wrought him such deep injury, but continued to use it, as he thought, in moderation. Many weeks had not expired before Mrs. Harper's eyes were opened to the sad truth that her husband was again coming more and more under the influence of liquor.

Before six months had passed away, Doctor Harper often went to bed stupid from drink. It need not be told how wretched this made his wife; more especially as he became gloomy, morose, arbitrary and fault-finding. How sad the change which a single year had made! Twelve months before, there was not a kinder husband nor a happier wife to be found. Now, but few words of pleasant intercourse passed between them—and there was too often positive unkind treatment on the part of Harper. Like too many others, when drunk, he was a devil, and seemed to take a cruel delight in tormenting those whom he most loved when in his right mind. The consequence was, that his children began to have a perception of his condition, and would shrink away from him whenever he had been drinking—while his wife ever trembled when she looked for his return.

Of all this, old Mr. Atherton, the father of Mrs. Harper, knew nothing. Indeed, it was the work of a single year, and there had been no opportunity for his detecting it by observation. Of course his daughter dreamed not of communicating, but sought rather to conceal it.

Once a year, since their marriage, had Mr. Atherton spent with them a short time in summer, when he sought recreation from the cares of business, to which he still continued to devote himself. A few weeks before he was expected, Mrs. Harper's fourth child had been born, and she was sitting with it in her arms, one evening about twilight, when the stage stopped at the door. In a few moments after she was clasped in the arms of her father.

"How much I have wanted to see this sweet little stranger," he said, after they were seated, bending over the babe that lay on its mother's bosom, and kissing it fondly! "Dear little angel! How perfect a miniature image she is of yourself, Grace." And as he said so, he looked into his daughter's face long and attentively.

"How pale and thin you look, my child," he said, after regarding her for a few moments.

The heart of Mrs. Harper was full to overflowing, and it had been with an effort that she had kept the tears from gushing forth from her eyes. His remark completed the overthrow of her self-control, and she burst into tears.

"Why do you weep, Grace? You have not been used to receiving me with tears."

"You know I have been sick, father," she said, endeavoring to smile, after the agitation of her mind had subsided a little, "and am yet hardly myself again."

"Where is the Doctor? and the children?" he asked, seemingly satisfied with her answer, although he felt misgivings that all was not right.

"The Doctor has not come home yet. He was called out into the country this afternoon, and may not be back until towards nine or ten o'clock. The children have just been put to bed; but I will send for them all to come down. They must see grandpa' to-night."

"No, no, I will go and see them," he said, rising and going up into the chamber, where he spent half an hour with his dear little pets, delighting and delighted. Tea being then announced, he kissed each innocent face, and bade them a tender good-night.

The Doctor had not yet arrived, and he sat down to the table alone with his daughter, into whose face he could not help looking earnestly every now and then. In its expression there was, to him, something new, and strange, and painful—something that sent a chill to his heart. He did not again allude to it, but its effect was evident in a slight degree of embarrassment which he felt, and perceived a like embarrassment in the manner of Grace.

They had finished their meal, but were still sitting at the table, engaged in conversation, when Mrs. Harper turned slightly towards the back window of the room in a listening attitude, while her face grew paler, and a look of alarm passed over it.

"What is the matter, Grace?" her father asked.

"Nothing," she replied, with an effort to smile; "I am a little nervous since I was sick, and am startled at every sound."

The conversation was renewed, but interrupted again, in a few minutes, by the same look of alarm.

"Tell me, Grace, what it is you fear?" Mr. Atherton said, half rising from his chair.

"O, nothing, father! I am foolish sometimes; but I cannot help it. I did n't use to be such a coward."

Mr. Atherton was puzzled. Grace hardly seemed like his own child. Once so cheerful, and frank; now starting at an imaginary sound, for he heard nothing; tearful, and studious to conceal the cause of her agitation.

But a brief period passed, when Grace exhibited the same indications of alarm, and this time her father distinctly heard a movement in the yard. He rose instantly to his feet, and said:

"Tell me, Grace, what it is you fear, that I may know how to protect you. Speak out plainly, my child. This mystery is all as strange as it is painful to me."

"The Doctor—" but she could say no more.

"What of him, Grace?"

But she uttered not another word.

The old man then took a light, and opening the door that led into the yard, went out, unrestrained by Mrs. Harper. As he held the candle over his head, the first object that met his eye was the figure of a man standing near the window, supporting himself against the fence that enclosed the yard.

"Why, Doctor! what is the matter?" he said, going up and laying his hand upon his son-in-law, whom he instantly recognized.

A drunken exclamation instantly unravelled the mystery of the whole evening! How the old man's heart did bound, and throb, and flutter in his bosom! For a moment his brain reeled, and he felt as if he would fall to the earth. Then recovering himself, he laid firmly hold of Harper's arm, and led him into the house, where he sank down upon a sofa, and was in a few minutes fast asleep.

Who can truly describe the heart-searching misery which was endured by Mr. Atherton and his daughter in that fearful moment when all was thus revealed! When the father became conscious of how bitter a cup had been placed to the lips of his child—and conscious of the hopelessness of her condition. For a long time no word was spoken by either. Grace came and sat down by his side, and leaned her head upon his bosom, while he drew his arm around her and supported her half reclining body. Thus they sat for nearly half an hour, the deep silence of the room broken only by the oppressive breathing of the drunken man. At length Mr. Atherton said, in a half whisper:

"Grace, how long has this been so?"

"Only a few months," was the reply.

"How long as bad as this?"

"Not long. He is hardly ever so bad as this. Not once in a month."

"Have you ever spoken to him about it?"

"Yes: but he cannot bear it."

"Is he unkind to you?"

"No."

"Do not deceive me, Grace. I am your father, and care for you, and you ought to tell me all without disguise."

"He is uniformly kind to me, father, except when in liquor. And he is not himself then, you know."

Mr. Atherton sighed heavily, and remained silent for some moments. At length he said:

"Would you rather not have him come to your room to-night, Grace?"

"Yes. But he cannot be prevented, father," she said, after a brief hesitation.

"Why would you rather not have him come?"

"I don't know that I care much about it, father, the young wife said, after another pause.

"Yes, but Grace, you said just now that you did. Do not deceive me, my child. Speak out plainly. Are you really afraid to have him come into your room to-night?"

"Not on my own account, father."

"Then on whose account?"

"My babe's."

"Why on her's?"

"Because he is not himself, you know. And he is a little rough sometimes."

"He shall not enter your chamber to-night, Grace," Mr. Atherton said, in a positive tone.

"Do not be harsh with him, father; he will not bear it;" Grace urged.

"Have no fear of that, my child. And now do you go to bed, and lock your door. Leave the rest to me."

After kissing her father tenderly, and bidding him a tearful good-night, Grace retired to her chamber with her babe, but not to sleep. How could she sleep under such circumstances!

Meanwhile, old Mr. Atherton seated himself in a large chair in the adjoining room to that in which Doctor Harper lay asleep, to await the result. When he awoke, be it early or late, it was his fixed resolution to prevent him from entering his wife's chamber, at any and all hazards. Though well advanced in years, he was yet in the vigor of a green old age, and nerved by his love for his injured child, he felt ready to brave anything that might oppose his duty to her.

It was nearly twelve o'clock, when a movement in the next room indicated that the Doctor was awake. Mr. Atherton was on his feet in a moment, and met him at the door as he came out into the passage.

"Doctor," he said, laying his hand upon his arm, "I am sorry to find you in this condition."

"What condition do you mean?" he asked, in an offended tone.

"Partially intoxicated;" was the calm, distinct answer.

"Do you come here to insult me in my own house, Mr. Atherton? I thought better things of you, sir."

"You are not yourself yet, Doctor," the old man said in reply. "Come back into the parlor, and lie down again on the sofa."

"No, I am going up to bed."

"Where?"

"In my own chamber, of course. Where else did you suppose?"

"Any where else but there. You are not fit to go into your wife's chamber, and she with an infant only a few weeks old."

"And pray, sir, why am I not fit?"

"Because, as I have just said, you are intoxicated."

"If any one but you were to say that, I would strike him to my feet," he said, his eyes flashing as he spoke.

"Such an act would not alter your present condition. It would make you none the less under the influence of liquor," was Mr. Atherton's calm reply.

For a few minutes, the Doctor regarded the old man with a look as fixed and stern as it was possible for him to give, and then turned and made a movement to ascend the stairs. But Mr. Atherton's mind was made up as to his course of conduct, and he instantly laid his hand, with a firm grasp, upon the arm of his son-in-law, and held him back.

"You cannot go to your wife's chamber to-night, Doctor," he said.

"But I will go!" was the angry, positive reply.

"Not while I possess the smallest power of resistance"—Mr. Atherton said, still holding his arm tightly.

For a moment or two the drunken man hesitated, and then turned and went into the parlor again, where he threw himself upon a sofa. Mr. Atherton re-entered the adjoining room, and seated himself in a large, stuffed rocking-chair. Nearly an hour passed in profound silence, and Mr. Atherton was about falling away into sleep, when a slight noise attracted his attention, and looking towards the door, he saw the Doctor stealthily gliding up the stairs.

When Mrs. Harper retired, with her babe, to her chamber, it was under the influence of many contending and agitating emotions. For the first time, her father had learned the sad falling away of her husband—that husband whom she had so loved and honored for his deep affection for her, and for his high intellectual and moral worth. And in learning it he had found himself called upon to act as her protector against him who had promised before God and man to love and protect and cherish her at all times. She thought of this, and then of the consequences that might ensue, if her father should be called upon to oppose his entrance to her chamber—he, far advanced in years, and her husband in the vigor of early manhood.—And she trembled at the thought. Sometimes she would resolve to go down stairs and urge her father not to attempt any opposition to his wishes—but when she thought of her helpless babe that lay nestling in her bosom, she hesitated. *He was a little rough sometimes!*

For a long time she lay awake, her mind pained and agitated, but at length she sunk into sleep. From this she was startled by a noise at her door.

"You cannot enter here," she heard her father say, in a mild, but positive tone.

"It is my wife's chamber, and I *will* enter. There is not a man on earth who shall prevent me," her husband replied, angrily.

"You cannot go in, Doctor."

"Stand aside, sir!"

"Why will you seek thus to disturb your wife? Remember

that it is now midnight, and she asleep with her infant. You are in no condition to enter her chamber. Go into this room, and pass the night—it will be better for you, and better for her."

"Stand aside, I say!" laying his hand, at the same time, upon the shoulder of Mr. Atherton.

"It is useless for you to persist, Doctor," the old man said, his manner becoming still more positive; "you shall not enter this room to-night, unless it be over my body! My child is there, and since you have forfeited all claim to be her protector, I will resume my former right."

"Stand aside, I say!"

"Not while I have life."

For more than a minute did Doctor Harper confront the old man, looking him all the while sternly in the face; but Mr. Atherton's eye blanched not, nor did his purpose waver for a moment. This was felt by the half-sobered man whose purpose he was opposing.

"You will repent this," he said, turning suddenly away, and entering an adjoining chamber, where he threw himself upon a bed, and was soon fast asleep.

To convey an idea of what Mrs. Harper suffered during that brief, but, to her, frightful interview, is impossible. At one moment she was ready to throw open the door, and thus end the contest, and even once went so far as to rise and lay her hand upon the lock. But she hesitated, and in an agony of fear stood listening to the stern, angry words of her husband and father, expecting every moment to hear the awful sounds of violence. But she was spared that severest trial. Doctor Harper was not so far lost to all consciousness of right, as to have any idea of offering personal violence to Mr. Atherton. When he found that the old man resolved to maintain his position at all hazards, he gave up the contest.

It would be hard to tell who felt worst on the next morning—or who dreaded most to meet the others at the breakfast table. Doctor Harper was, in a good degree, conscious of what had occurred during the evening and part of the night; although, nothing was distinct to his mind. But enough could be remembered to make him aware that he had acted to the eyes of Mr. Atherton a most astonishing part—and one that made him feel the deepest shame and self-condemnation. His pride, however pre-

vented his exhibiting this, and when his father-in-law came down, he met him with the freedom and frank welcoming that he had ever given him at his annual visit. Mrs. Harper came down soon after, and with an effort at cheerfulness took her position at the table. But her thin, pale face, and look of suffering that she could not conceal, recalled, too vividly, the painful events of the night previous. The conversation that was going on between her husband and father became embarrassed, and continued only with an effort on either side, during the meal that was briefly concluded.

When Mrs. Harper retired from the table, the two men went into the parlor, where Mr. Atherton at once, and distinctly, alluded to the condition in which he had so unexpectedly found Doctor Harper. As the fault could neither be concealed nor justified, it was, at once, acknowledged, with a promise to renounce entirely all use of ardent spirits. Then followed a full confession to Mr. Atherton of his trials and struggles, and previous resolutions of reformation, in regard to the habit that was fast ruining his peace and prospects. To this Mr. Atherton replied with the best advice, and strongest admonition that he could give. The deep shame and penitence of his son-in-law gave him hope; and a sojourn with him for three weeks, during which no man was ever more perfectly sober, confirmed that hope, and made him feel, that in returning home, he might do so, without feeling any great degree of uneasiness for his daughter and her family. Before parting with Grace, he conjured her, in the strongest terms, to let him know, immediately, should her husband relapse into his former habits, which she promised to do.

Scarcely two weeks had passed since her father's return to Baltimore, before Grace became conscious that her husband was again indulging himself. Often, when he came home at night, he would be stupid; and, so soon as he retired to bed, fall into a heavy sleep, and oppress the air of their chamber with the fetid odor of his breath. Six months had hardly rolled around, before he had so given himself up to drink, that every night he would come home so under its influence as to be either insensible, or arbitrary and ill-natured. The consequences to his professional standing may readily be supposed. Family after family withdrew their confidence; and the loss of two or three important cases, through inattention, and inability from drink, to properly under-

stand and administer to them, completed his downfall as a physician in the town of ——. It is true, that he was frequently called upon to administer, but not in any families that he cared to retain, nor that were at all desirable to a physician.

The effect of all this was to drive him more frequently to the tavern, where he was now to be found oftener than in his office, or engaged in professional business. Of all this Mr. Atherton was profoundly ignorant. Notwithstanding the promise of Grace, she could not bring herself to communicate to her father intelligence of the dreadful change that had so rapidly followed his return to the city. She was sure that he would require her to come home with her children, and abandon her husband, and this she was not prepared to do. It was for this reason that she kept from him what she had faithfully promised to communicate.

The gradually diminishing income of Doctor Harper made it necessary that there should be a corresponding reduction of expenses. This his wife saw, and proposed that they should give up the house in which they lived, one of the handsomest in the town, and remove to a pleasant little cottage on the suburbs, then vacant. This was agreed to, and, in due time, they took possession of their new and humbler home. This was a relief to the mind of Mrs. Harper, for now she could shrink from observation, and hide herself away from the curious eyes of those whose pity, no matter how sincere, pained and oppressed her.

As has been intimated, that mortification at the condition of her husband, reduced circumstances, and, worse than all, diminished respect and regard for the man in whose affection had been garnered up all her hopes and happiness, were not all the evils to which she had become subjected. Like too many others, drunkenness did not only make Doctor Harper neglectful of his wife and children, but it made him cruel. It not only debased him to the mere selfish and sensual condition of the brute, but made a devil of him. From one of the tenderest and most affectionate of husbands, he had become irritable, jealous, and fault-finding; and when insane, from intoxication, his wife often suffered from physical abuse. His children had learned to fear him, and his wife to tremble at his coming.

The cottage in which they now lived, stood just on the suburbs of the town, and was removed to some distance from every other dwelling. Grace often felt very lonely as she sat, night after

night, sometimes until twelve, and sometimes until one o'clock, waiting for the return of her husband, who now spent every evening at the tavern, having, with a strange infatuation, almost totally abandoned himself. Sometimes, she would sit, trembling, hour after hour, a prey to vague fears; and, at other times, shrink amid the war and strife of the elements. Naturally timid and fearful, in this lonely, and, it seemed to her, exposed condition, she suffered most intensely. A movement without, that she could not account for, or a slight sound within, breaking in upon the oppressive stillness that surrounded her, as she sat, often with her babe in her arms, waiting for her husband's return, would startle every nerve, and almost paralyze her with strange and uncertain terrors. In vain did she strive to overcome these fears. She could not throw them off—she could not grow familiar with her new condition.

One night in the summer of the year after her father, who was still ignorant of her husband's relapse, had visited them, Mrs. Harper observed that a heavy storm was gathering about the horizon. The last few days had been very sultry, and she felt sure that this storm would be accompanied with intense lightning and thunder.

"Do not go out to-night, Doctor," she said, laying her hand upon his arm, as he went towards the door with his hat on, after rising from the tea-table; "we are going to have a heavy storm, and you know how much afraid I am of lightning."

"Do you think it will hurt you any quicker because I am away?" he replied, in a half-contemptuous tone.

"No—but, then, it is so lonely here. I cannot help it—but I always feel dreadfully when I am alone in a storm."

"You have the children."

"Yes—but they are not like you. Come, don't go out, dear!" she said, in a pleading tone. "Stay with me, for once. If you knew how strangely I have felt all day, and how I start and tremble at every sound, you would not leave me to-night, and such a storm as that rising."

"I don't believe that there will be any storm here to-night," he replied. "It will all go round. So don't give yourself any needless alarm, Grace. I would stay with you if I could, but I have an engagement that I must meet."

And so saying, Dr. Harper stepped from the door, and strode

hastily away. His poor wife sunk into her chair faint and feeble. She was not what she had been a year or two ago; full of health and confidence, with a buoyant step, and a high flow of spirits. Her nerves were all shattered, her spirits depressed, and her heart well nigh broken. A distant roar of thunder startled her, in a few minutes, and she arose and went to the door to take another survey of the horizon. The dark clouds had become rolled together in dense masses, flecked here and there with light, fleecy vapors, that hurried across, moved by stronger currents of air; and the whole storm had reached up towards the zenith, indicating a rapid approach. As she stood looking at it, a fierce line of lightning darted through half the distance from the zenith to the horizon, with intense rapidity, and then a heavy, jarring intonation followed. All this her husband saw and heard, himself but a few hundred yards from the house. But he paused not, nor hesitated in his mind, but walked onward with a quickened pace.

The heart of the poor wife sank in her bosom, as it had never sunk before, with a strange fear, for which she could not at all account. Some new affliction seemed pending over her—some new danger to lurk in her way. Mechanically she proceeded to undress her children, four in number, all mere babes, and to place them in their beds. Then lifting her heart upwards in a silent prayer for comfort and protection, she seated herself near a window with a trembling heart to await the approaching tempest. Rapidly did the dark, angry clouds ascend from the horizon, and spread themselves with threatening aspect over the sky, while ever and anon the fierce flash would leap out from their bosom, and the thunder boom heavily in the distance.

At last there came the brooding silence, the deep shadowy darkness of the impending clouds, as the storm hung suspended for a brief period ere it awoke in its strength. To these succeeded a few large drops, touching here and there like the stealthy steps of an approaching enemy. Then, with a sudden wild energy, the storm came down in wind, and hail, and fierce bickering flame, and the crashing of thunder.

Pale and statue-like, her heart shrinking and fluttering in her bosom, did Mrs. Harper sit alone for more than an hour, with the sound of the wild, roaring tempest in her ears, and her eyes dazzled with the intense quivering flashes of light that blazed out incessantly in broad sheets of flame, while her husband, with a

few drinking friends, lounged in the bar-room of a tavern, scarcely heeding the war of elements.

At last the lightning came less frequently, and with a tempered glare—the thunder began to roll in the distance, and the wild roaring of the storm to subside.

"Thank God, it is over!" she said, glancing upwards, as she arose and paced the room to and fro, her heart relieved from the burden of fear that had oppressed it. Soon all was hushed into oppressive silence, and the hours began to steal away towards midnight, as the lonely wife sat waiting, with her babe in her arms, for the return of her husband.

Time passed on, and the candle that stood upon the little table near which she sat, had burned, unnoted by her, low in the socket, when the distant rumbling of the stage fell upon her ear, indicating the hour of twelve.

"So late, and yet he has not returned!" she murmured, rousing herself, and listening with an interest that appeared to her strange, to the approaching sound that grew louder and nearer every moment. It seemed as if that midnight stage bore something for her.

"Who knows but that father is coming. It is near the time of his regular visit," she said to herself, and then she listened and waited with a new and trembling interest. Presently the stage was almost at the door. It paused—stopped! She sprang to the door, and glanced down the little avenue leading to the main road.

"Here is a letter for Mrs. Harper," the driver said, tossing one to Grace; "I have been requested to deliver it in passing, as it contains news of importance."

Then dashing forward again, the noise of the wheels soon died on the ears of Mrs. Harper, who had re-entered the house, and was breaking, with trembling hands and fluttering heart, the seal of the letter that had come into her possession, it seemed, so strangely.

Its distressing import was soon apparent. Her father had died suddenly on the day before. This much her bewildered senses took in, when her over-tried heart could bear no more. She sank upon the floor insensible.

It was near one o'clock when her husband came in, half-stupefied with drink. The candle had burned out, and all was dark-

ness within his dwelling. Vexed at finding no light, he was groping his way across the room, muttering in drunken anger at his wife for the neglect, when he stumbled against her body, and came near falling. Stooping down to feel what it was that had obstructed his steps, he passed his hand over her face, and found it strangely cold and clammy to his touch. A sudden feeling of alarm thrilled his heart, and partly sobered him. After groping about for some time, he succeeded in obtaining a light, which was instantly held close to her face. It was pale as ashes, and death-like in its expression. In her hand she still held the letter she had received. This her husband disengaged from her fingers that were tightly clasped upon it, and read its startling contents. For a moment or two after he had become distinctly conscious of the afflicting event that had so suddenly taken place, his brain reeled —then he was as perfectly sober as ever he was in his life.

How keen and heart-searching was the remorse that he felt, as he looked down upon the thin, pale, expressionless face, that was turned towards him, and thought how basely he had betrayed the confidence and trampled upon the affections of the gentle being who had forsaken all for him. Raising her up tenderly, and laying her upon a bed, he assiduously applied such means as he knew would be likely to restore her fleeting senses, and soon perceived the signs of returning animation. At last, as he bent anxiously over her, she opened her eyes, and looked him steadily in the face, with an expression of such hopeless agony, for consciousness had fully returned, that he was affected almost to tears. Then she closed her eyes slowly, while her bosom heaved with a deep oppressive sigh.

"Grace!"

But she did not seem to hear her name, though uttered in a tone of unusual tenderness.

"Grace!"

She opened her eyes and looked up into the face that bent over her, but her countenance expressed no heartfelt recognition of that voice, once full of power to stir every tender emotion of her nature.

"Grace! Dear Grace!"

Her eyes had again closed, but now they flew open quickly and a sudden flash passed over her face.

"May I claim," he continued, "to share in your sorrow—to

mourn with you? To be again a husband to one I have so madly neglected?" As he spoke thus, Doctor Harper stooped down, and kissed, tenderly, her pale cheek.

Quick as thought her arms were about his neck, clasping it with a strong convulsive effort. Then the pent up waters burst forth, and she wept and sobbed upon his bosom for a long, long time, until exhausted nature at last gave way, when succeeded a deep calm, falling upon her spirits like the gentle and peaceful influence of a happier state than that in which she was really involved.

A quiet sleep soon fell upon her senses, locking all to her in sweet forgetfulness. In the morning came the full realization of her condition. Then came the cold and heart-aching sensation of bereavement. Then she felt the keen smarting of severed ties, that even the gentle efforts of a truly repentant husband had no power to assuage. But she could not have quiet in her grief. The last sad duties were to be performed. A hurried journey was to be taken that she might look her last look upon the dear face of that father whom her heart had loved with such pure and deep affection.

Accompanied by her husband, Mrs. Harper set off early on the morning, and reached Baltimore by the middle of the day. During most of the journey he conversed freely of the past, and solemnly promised that he would amend. Like assurances he gave her as they returned a few days afterwards, having completed arrangements to remove to the city, where a very handsome property had been left to them. It did not take long to sever the few ties that bound them to ——; the scene of exquisite pain to one, and deep mortification and disgrace to the other. In a few weeks from the time of Mr. Atherton's removal to a world of spirits, his daughter, with her husband and children, were inmates of his late tasteful, and even elegant residence.

A year glided swiftly away, and, as month after month passed, and still her husband remained true to his resolution, the heart of Grace began to gain strength, and the trembling hope of her bosom to acquire confidence. Gradually Doctor Harper obtained a practice, that was extending itself — and, as a physician of decided ability, he was beginning to assume a position that was both honorable to himself and the profession. But, in his resolution as a reformed drinker, he stood alone. And besides, the

total abstinence principle, although it had been declared by some to be the only true principle upon which to found a reformation, was looked upon as the scheme of ultraism. In this Doctor Harper agreed with the mass, and would, in consequence, occasionally take a glass of wine, or ale, or cider, as it came in his way. It may readily be perceived in what a dangerous position he stood; nor will it be thought any thing strange that he again fell.

"I am going to dine out to-day, Grace," he said one morning, more than a year after they had removed to the city, "so do not wait for me."

"With whom, dear?" his wife asked, her heart beating with quicker motion, she hardly acknowledged to herself why.

"Doctor S—— gives a dinner-party to-day, and as Doctors M—— and L—— of New York are to be there, I wish particularly to be present."

"Come home early to tea, then, Doctor," Mrs. Harper said.

Her husband promised, and then left his office, to attend to his professional duties.

In spite of every effort to throw off what she tried to call an idle concern, Mrs. Harper felt troubled all day long; and towards evening, when the time came for his return, she was nervous and excited, and waited and watched for him with an anxious suspense that she tried in vain to banish from her mind. But he did not come with the twilight, nor for nearly an hour after. Then he returned in a carriage, from which he had to be lifted and supported up to his chamber. He was again intoxicated!

From that hour his course was downward. In one year he sunk so low, and became so abandoned to drink, that no one would employ him as a physician. One vice usually brings on another. At least so it proved in his case. The association into which he fell led him to the gambling table as a kind of excitement. Here he wasted rapidly the little fortune he had received at the death of Mr. Atherton.

"Grace," he said, one morning, about four years after their removal to the city, "we shall have to sell this house."

The pale, care-worn, and sorrow-stricken creature, the mere shadow of her former self, lifted her eyes to his face, inquiringly, and asked—

"Why sell the house, Doctor?"

"To get something to buy bread with"—was the brief answer, in an impatient tone.

"I think we had better not sell this house, Doctor," she replied, mildly. "If every thing else is gone, and we sell this, where shall we find a shelter for our children?"

"I don't see any sense in starving them in a fine house, if you do," her husband said, angrily. "We must sell it, and thus get something to live on, for everything else is gone, let me tell you."

"All our bank stock?"

"Certainly. You did n't suppose it was going to last for ever?"

To this Mrs. Harper made no reply. She had long feared that her husband was rapidly wasting their substance; but did not dream that all was gone, except the house in which they lived. And now she was called upon to express a willingness to part with that—to remove with her children she knew not whither.

"I can make a good sale of it," her husband proceeded. "Eight thousand dollars are offered for the house and lot."

Then producing the title deeds, he added—

"You will, of course, consent to the sale, and sign away your right in the property?"

"I would rather not do it, Doctor," Mrs. Harper said, looking up into his face, imploringly.

"But you will have to do it, madam. I have already sold it, and the purchaser is now waiting to receive a clear title."

"How could you do so, Doctor, without an intimation of your design to me. You must have known that I could not leave this house without a painful trial," Mrs. Harper said, giving way to tears.

"It 's useless to go to crying about it, Grace. The thing can't be helped now. And it 's foolish in you to wish to stay here and keep up appearances that we have nothing to sustain. I gave you the last ten dollars we had in the world, besides this house, day before yesterday, and we owe a good many little bills around, which can only be paid out of the proceeds of this sale. So come, put your name to the paper. Eight thousand dollars will last a good while. We can move into a smaller house, and live very comfortably—especially as I am going to open an office again, and give more attention to business."

Grace took the deed in her hand, and ran her eye over it, al-

though she did not comprehend the meaning of a single word, for her mind was altogether abstracted.

"Here 's a pen," her husband said.

And she took the pen in her fingers mechanically.

"Sign here," he proceeded, placing his finger opposite to one of the seals printed on the document, and Mrs. Harper bent over the paper which her husband had pressed down upon the table.

"There, sign there," continued Doctor Harper, eagerly and in a kinder tone of voice.

"Sign for what?" Mrs. Harper now said, rousing herself and throwing off the dreamy abstraction under which she had been laboring.

"Why, sign a transfer of this deed to Mr. ——'

"The deed of this house?"

"Certainly!"

"No, Doctor, I cannot do that," and the pen dropped from her hand.

"But you must sign it!"

"I cannot."

"You *shall* sign it!" and her husband's face grew flushed, and his voice was loud and angry.

But neither threats, commands, nor persuasions, could move her. She would not sign away her interest in the property, and the sale could not be made. For months after, her husband pursued a regular course of persecution in order to gain her over to his wishes. But she was firm in her duty to her children. She would not deprive them of a home.

Still it was only a home in name, without some new effort on her part. As her husband had said, everything else was gone, and there was no means within to buy bread. But his want of money for his own base purposes, joined with her want of money to supply the need of her family, and by a common consent, various articles of furniture were sold: he using part of the proceeds in drinking and gambling. This, Mrs. Harper was aware, could only be a temporary expedient, and she began to cast about in her mind for some employment, in which she could be enabled to supply the wants of her children.

In her education, no care or expense had been spared by her father. While at school, she attained a more than ordinary proficiency in the various branches that were taught; and especially

in music, had she acquired a high degree of excellence. For some years, however, she had felt little inclined to give attention to her music, and had consequently lost much of her power over the instruments upon which she had once peformed with exquisite skill. But a natural taste for music, united with a very fine ear for musical sounds, soon enabled her, with the practice of a few hours every day, to bring back a large portion of what had been lost, and to add much that was new.

When confidence in her own abilities was restored, she, after consultation with her husband, who readily consented, advertised to give lessons in music, either at her own house, or at the house of her pupils. A few scholars were obtained to whose instruction she gave all the required attention. But this new demand upon her physical energies soon made it painfully apparent to her that she was assuming duties beyond her strength. The care of her children, and an almost constant devotion to household duties, were enough for her feeble frame, weakened by long-continued mental sufferings, to bear; but when were added to these, new and even severer efforts, she felt that she was taxing a delicate constitution, already much broken, too far. If, in all this wearying toil, she had met the quick sympathy of her husband, she might have borne up. But to see him coming and going every day—a strong, healthy man, except so far as indulgence in drink had weakened his physical frame—eating of the bread she had provided in weariness, and sometimes pain, for her children, and not even giving her a kind look or word, broke down her spirits, and, at times, almost disheartened her. But the sight of her children, and the thought of them, kept her up.

Still she failed gradually; and after the devotion of a few months to her new duties, found herself growing daily weaker and weaker. Every morning on awaking, instead of being refreshed, she experienced a feeling of lassitude that it required an effort to overcome; and frequently, during the day, while standing at the piano, giving lessons, a faintness would come over her, requiring, often, a brief cessation of her labors. Thus she continued for nearly two years, receiving pupils in her own house part of each day, and, during another portion of it, giving lessons at the dwellings of some of her scholars. Her evenings, or rather half of her nights, were regularly given to her family, as she could only afford to keep a single servant, a kind of doer of all

work. In this way, she was barely able to provide a scanty support for her children and husband.

How cheerfully would she have performed it all, overwearying as it was, had the necessity for such a devotion of herself been a legitimate one—had her husband been in ill health, or deprived of business by circumstances beyond his control. But to see him passing to and fro daily, loathsome in appearance, brutalized in mind, unkind, and utterly regardless of herself or his children; was a trial too severe for her to bear up under. It seemed almost impossible for her to realize that he was the same kind, affectionate, high-minded, intelligent man to whom, in her brighter days, she had yielded up the affections of her young heart. Yet still she felt that it was, alas! too true—and what was worse, there seemed for her hard condition no remedy.

For more than a year after the effort to induce his wife to sign away her right in the last remnant of their property, Doctor Harper, almost constantly under the influence of liquor, pursued towards her a systematic course of persecution, in order to break down her determination. During all that time no pleasant word was spoken to her; and her anxious eye sought his face again and again, day after day, for a single look of kindness, but in vain. All of her gentle attentions were received with indifference, an angry coldness, or direct repulsion. Still she continued them, with a persevering sense of duty, that would have won upon any heart but one made callous by the perverting influence of such a low, sensual indulgence as that to which her husband had become addicted. No angry word was met with a like reply. Indifference was not repaid by indifference, nor neglect by neglect. In all her relations of a wife, she acted the part of a true wife, in duty—in affectionate attention, if it is possible for a woman's heart to be moved by the holy principle of love for an object so repulsive, none were more faithful that she. And yet, for more than twelve months, her ear never took in a kind word, nor was her heart made to leap under the influence of a pleasant look or smile.

But she was immovable, under a trial that would have broken down the resolution of almost any woman. The deep love she bore for her little ones, kept her ever nerved to endure the trial, and she did endure it to the end.

The selfishness of her husband caused him to change somewhat,

in his manner towards her at last. Without credit, or the means of procuring money, he found himself unable to obtain the daily potations his insatiable thirst for strong drink required. There was no one to whom he could look but his wife: and to her he at last turned with a semblance of kindness, that fell upon her heart as refreshingly as the gentle dews to the parched ground.

"Can you spare me half a dollar, Grace?" he said one morning, in a mild, conciliatory tone, as he was about to go out.

It was the first time he had spoken to her in kindness for more than a year.

"Certainly, Doctor," she responded, while the tears dimmed her eyes. And she handed him the desired amount.

He returned a grateful look and word. How that look and word lived in her memory through the day, and lightened the toil that she had found so hard to endure.

On the next morning a like request was made, and granted even more cheerfully than the first. Indeed the poor wife had begun to fear that he would not ask again.

Daily now was this new draft made upon her slender resources. But it was met with a degree of pleasure that she hardly acknowledged to herself. It was a sacrifice, and required new efforts, but to her it was a small sacrifice for so great a gain—the pleasant looks and words of her husband, even were they but half sincere.

She now gave renewed attention to his appearance, and tried in every way to make his home a pleasant place. But how vain the effort! Every day he would come home, or be brought home, intoxicated; his clothes, to which she had given so much care, and upon which she would often exhaust her slender means, torn or soiled, and his face frequently disfigured by bruises from having fallen in the street. Only in the morning was he at all rational, but rarely repentant. For the brief pleasure then given, she had to pay dearly; he soon became more exacting, and would frequently want a dollar instead of half the amount at first solicited. The refusal, no matter upon what ground, of his request, made him angry. Poor Mrs. Harper had endured that anger so long, that no sacrifice seemed too great to turn it aside. She therefore, always gave him the money he asked for if in her power.

But his want of money soon went far beyond her power to sup-

ply, and then succeeded seasons of clouds and gloom, to which her ordinary affliction of mind was but as a passing obscuration. All this tended to break down her health more rapidly. The artificial stimulus, when withdrawn, left her weakened frame to sink into a feebler condition, from which she, in vain, endeavored to rouse herself. At last she broke down suddenly, and had to take to her bed. Overtasked nature would bear up no longer.

"Can't you stay home with me to-day, Doctor?" she said, lifting her languid eyes to her husband's face, as she saw him preparing to go out on the morning after she was taken suddenly ill with a prostrating fever, and then turning them upon her four children, who were sitting about the room, neglected and spiritless.

The wretched man did not reply, but paced the floor backwards and forwards for a long time. The desire for liquor was on him, and it was overpowering. But he had no money, and he did not believe that his wife had any. And even if she had, some touches of shame and reluctance arose in his mind at the idea of asking for it under such circumstances. Still debating in his own mind whether he should ask her or not, he continued walking the room for full half an hour, when he turned away and went down stairs. There he paced the floor for half an hour longer before going out. As he was sober, all this brought reflections of no very pleasant character.

"It is too late to mend now," he muttered to himself, as he walked hurriedly along, "I must have something to drink, or it will set me crazy."

"Lend me half a dollar, Mr. ——," he said, suddenly turning into the shop of a tailor, in whose family he had once practised.

The request came so unexpectedly, and was for so small a sum, that Mr. —— put his hand into his pocket and was about handing out the piece of coin he had been asked for, when he recollected himself and paused.

"What do you want with it, Doctor?" he asked, looking the individual he addressed steadily in the face.

Harper stammered out an incoherent reply, to which Mr. —— responded by gently admonishing him in regard to his conduct.

"It's no use to talk to me about changing now, Mr. ——. I've tried to do it too often," he said, doggedly.

"But I know that there is use. Come to our Washington

meeting to-night at Union Hall, and you will be satisfied that you can reform."

"I don't believe it," was the reply, as he turned away and left the shop.

For at least an hour did Doctor Harper wander about, before he returned. As he came into her chamber again, his wife saw that he had not been drinking. He came to her bedside, felt her pulse, and wrote a prescription, which he handed to her, and then went down stairs. Mrs. Harper sent her oldest child to the druggist's, and obtained the medicine he had directed, and took it. It was about an hour afterwards when he came up and again inquired, kindly, how she did. At dinner time he sat down with the children, and eat sparingly. Then he wandered about the house most of the afternoon like one bewildered, and at night, after tea, went out as usual. But not to the tavern. He had thought much of what Mr. —— had said to him about going to Union Hall, and the more he thought about it, the more he felt inclined to go. To the meeting of the Washington Temperance Society he therefore went, and before leaving the Hall signed the pledge, as has been related in the opening of this article.

When he came home, he went up to his wife's bedside, and stood for some moments looking down upon her face, now flushed with fever. There was a rapid play of the muscles through every feature, and a restlessness that indicated an activity of mind, although her eyes were closed, and she seemed asleep. Suddenly she opened them, and looked up into his face with a wild staring expression. Her lips moved, and he bent down his head to listen.

"You won't kill me, Doctor, will you?" she said, in a husky whisper.

"Kill you, Grace! Why should I kill you?"

"I hav n't another cent in the world. But you won't kill me?"

The bewildered husband did not know how to reply. Could her mind be wandering? He took her hand, and found that her pulse was strong and quick—beating at least one hundred and fifty in the minute. It was too true. The fever had risen so high that delirium had supervened.

"I've given it all to you, Doctor," she added, looking up into his face imploringly; "and I'd give you my heart's blood if it would do you any good. Don't speak so coldly to me. Don't

look so angry. I have done my best, dear;" and the poor creature tried to smile with a look of affection. But it was a faint and ghastly smile, indicating the anguish of crushed affection, rather than the play of a living motion.

"I won't be angry any more, dear Grace! I won't look cold, nor speak unkindly any more," her husband said, soothingly and tenderly, as he bent down and pressed his lips to hers that were burning with fever. "I will love you again, and care for you, as I once did."

For an instant, the suffering wife looked her husband intently in the face. His words, she scarcely understood, but that act of genuine tenderness towards her, her heart perceived, even in delirium.

"It is all well," she murmured, while a sweet smile, whose genuine expression could not be mistaken, lit up every feature, as she closed her eyes, and sunk away into a gentle sleep.

But the fever abated not. In half an hour she awoke, still unsettled, but with the remembrance of that moment of reconciliation indelibly fixed in her mind. All night long did her husband sit by her bedside, the excitement of the scene compensating for the physical excitement that had been so suddenly withdrawn, and thus keeping his nerves fully strung. Towards morning the fever of his wife abated, and she sunk into a deep sleep. She looked so thin and pale, and death-like as he bent over her, that his heart bounded with an involuntary emotion of fear lest nature had become too much exhausted.

It was long after daylight when she again awoke, an expression of intelligence flitting over her countenance. She found her husband sitting by the bedside, holding her hand in his, and gazing down into her face with a look of subdued tenderness. She closed her eyes for a moment or two, as if to collect her mind, and then opened them again, and gazed intently upon him.

"Was it not all a sweet dream, then?" she murmured, in a doubting tone.

"No, Grace, it is no dream; but a blessed reality," her husband softly answered, bending over and kissing her. "From this hour I am a changed man—from this hour I will be to you what I was in years long passed away: the remembrance of which is still dear to me. Last night I threw myself within the sphere of the great moral reformation that is now progressing—the temper-

ance reformation—and I feel, I know, that there is in that sphere a sustaining power that will keep me true to my pledge. For the past, I dare not ask you to forgive me. If you can, let its deeds sink as much as possible into oblivion. But for the future, take hope. In the strength of Him whose divine power is present in every good resolution, I will be true to my wife, my children, and myself!"

In what better language than that of the following couplet can I describe the effect of this declaration upon the poor wife of Dr. Harper, to whom hope had sprung up suddenly as she had felt herself just entering the caverns of despair.

> "She rose—she sprung—she clung to his embrace,
> Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face."

And there she lay as weak as an infant, and full of the innocent, trusting affection of an infant, for a long, long time. So many years had passed since she could lie there with a feeling of confidence, that it seemed as if she could never be willing to remove her head from his bosom. At last, she murmured, lifting herself up, and sinking back upon her pillow, while the tears lay upon her cheeks,—

"We shall be happy again, dear husband!"

And they were again happy. Doctor Harper was not mistaken in the power of association. Up to this time, he had not only kept his pledge, but is one among the most active members of the temperance society. He has resumed the practice of medicine, and is fast acquiring confidence, and we doubt not will yet rise to eminence in his profession.

THE WIDOW'S SON.

It had snowed heavily throughout the day, but towards evening the temperature moderated, and it commenced raining steadily, with every appearance of the storm continuing for the night. The light snow, now thoroughly saturated with water, made the walking so bad that few individuals ventured forth, unless acted upon by the impulse of necessity, or seeking the gratification of some strong desire.

It was the last named motive that induced me to leave a comfortable fireside. So much had I become interested in the progress of the great movement that was in action, that I was eager to observe all its phases; I therefore availed myself of every opportunity to attend the meetings of the Reformers. This was the regular night, and I considered the question but a moment, before resolving to think but lightly of the storm.

As I picked my way through Lombard, in the neighborhood of Light street, I observed a man staggering along before me, evidently intoxicated. At the corner of Light street he paused, and looked, for some time, down towards the wharf, evidently debating an undecided question. While he thus stood, I came up to him, and saw that he was a man in the prime of life, miserably clad, and shivering with the cold. The rain had penetrated his garments until they were dripping—his feet, upon which were a pair of worn stockings, and shoes full of holes, were, of course, thoroughly soaked with the snow water, and were, as I supposed, nearly frozen.

Hundreds of times before had I passed such miserable creatures in the street with a feeling of shrinking disgust, but now my heart yearned for the poor wretch, shivering and shrinking in the storm, even though he was a debased drunkard, and in a state of intoxication.

"What are you doing out on such a night as this, my friend?" I said to him in a kind tone.

"I should think it would not take you long to guess," he replied, with some bitterness.

"Not after more of the accursed poison that has ruined you?" I said.

"What else do you think could bring me out on a night like this? But I have no money, and am burning up with thirst. Give me a few cents, sir, in the name of Heaven!"

"I cannot do that, my friend, because it would do you harm. But why not drink water, if you are so dry?"

"Water! water! then give me some water, or I shall be consumed with the fire within me."

I took hold of the wretched man's arm, and led him along until I came near a little shop, into which I went, and procured for him a glass of water. He drank it off with trembling eagerness.

"Now, my friend," I said, kindly and encouragingly, "would n't you give worlds, if you had them, to be able to break away from the bondage in which you now are?"

"Worlds!" he ejaculated with energy; "yes, millions of worlds! But my case is hopeless. Hundreds and hundreds of times have I resolved to reform, and hundreds and hundreds of times have I endeavored to put my good resolution into practice, but it was no use—I always went back again, and, at every such relapse, became worse. There is no hope—no hope!"

O how sad and mournful were his tones as he uttered that brief sentence!

"There *is* hope, my friend!" I remarked in a quick, confident, energetic voice, meant to inspire him, if possible, with a new resolution.

"How? Where? Do not mock me, sir," he replied—at first in a tone of confidence, that subsided into one of despondency and doubt.

"Have you not heard of the Washingtonians?"

"The Washingtonians? No. Who are they?"

"Reformed drinkers. Many of them men who were as far gone as you are."

"You are trifling with me, sir," the poor man said, shaking his head slowly. "No one ever heard of men like me reforming. Every body gives us over to destruction, and to destruction we go without a hand strong enough being reached out to save us."

"I have heard of many such," I replied, with emphatic ear-

nestness, "and if you will go with me to-night, I will show you more than a hundred men once as bad, if not worse than you are, who have reformed. And they will tell you so themselves, and tell you how you may reform. And not only tell you how, but will assist you to reform. Will you go with me?"

"I will," was his prompt answer.

And then he walked along with me, much sobered, while I said every thing I could to encourage him. We soon arrived at the meeting house. Notwithstanding the very inclement night, there were several hundreds present. The meeting not being yet organized, many individuals came round the poor wretch I had brought in, and commenced talking to him. I pointed to the condition of his feet, when, on examination, it was found that they were benumbed, and nearly frozen. A bucket of pump water was immediately obtained and his feet plunged into it, and held there until sensation was restored. Then a pair of dry, warm stockings, and a pair of new, stout shoes were placed upon them, and some of his drenched clothes removed, and warm, dry coarse garments were given to him in their stead.

He seemed bewildered at all this. He could but dimly comprehend its meaning. But he was becoming more and more sobered every moment. By this time the regular proceedings of the meeting had begun, which consisted principally of the relation of experiences. To these he listened with the deepest interest, and often could be seen drawing his hand across his eyes, evidently much affected. As one and another told how they had been enabled, by signing the pledge, and joining actively in the operations of the society, to overcome entirely the thirst for liquor, that had at one time been intolerable, I could see him lifting his head with an air of confidence that made my heart feel glad in my bosom.

After the speaking was over, and the pledge was read, he was the first to go forward and inscribe his name. As he returned to his seat, I stepped forward, and took his hand.

"You will keep that pledge, I know you will," I said, confidently.

"I feel as sure of it, as that I am standing here. I feel that there is a power here, in this society, that will sustain me. O, sir, I can never thank you enough for bringing me here!"

"Remain faithful, and that will be my highest reward."

"I will, I will," he replied, earnestly grasping my hand, and then passing on to his seat.

I need not say that my heart glowed in my bosom, and that I felt more than ever resolved to speak a warning or encouraging word to the poor drunkard wherever I should meet him. The history of the individual I have alluded to is one of much interest, involving details of a tender and pathetic character. I received it in part from his own lips, months after his reformation, and partly from his aged mother, who has invoked blessings on my head a hundred and a hundred times. Without further preliminaries, I will introduce it to the reader.

THE WIDOW'S SON.

"ALFRED!"

"I am here, father," replied the son, coming quickly to the bed-side, and bending over his dying parent with tender solicitude, mingled with deep sorrow at the sad bereavement he was evidently about to sustain.

"Is your mother here, Alfred?" the father said, as his son, just verging upon manhood, stood near him.

"She has left the room for a few minutes. Shall I call her?"

"No, my son, for I wish to speak to you alone."

A brief pause ensued, and then the father proceeded:—

"Alfred, a child can never know all that a tender mother feels for him—all that she has suffered for him. If he could know it, and feel it, he would never neglect her, or think lightly of her. You, my son, have been blessed with the tenderest mother—one who, from the moment the light of this world dawned upon you, has not ceased to love you, and care for you with the most affectionate solicitude. Time nor strength will permit me to tell you of all her care, and anxiety, and watchfulness over you through the period of infancy and youth, nor how untiring have been her exertions in the effort to impress upon you those high and pure principles that, if obeyed, will be your guide and defence in manhood. And now, that I am about to leave you—now that he, upon whom your mother has leaned for thirty years, is about being taken from her, will not her only son repay her deep and untiring solicitude by a return of care and affection that shall, in some degree, compensate for so great a loss? But I need not ask you this question,

my son. I have confidence in you. I am sure that the genuine truths that we have endeavored so carefully to implant in your mind, must and will take root, and produce good fruits. As for me, my son, standing as I now do upon the utmost verge of time, I am not afraid to pass through the narrow strait of death. I am conscious that I have endeavored, through a long life, to live in obedience to the pure and elevated principles of goodness and truth, and this now sustains me. And I pass away from this stage of existence with the more calmness under the deep consciousness which I have, that my removal will only bind the two beloved ones whom I leave behind me, in stronger bonds of affection. Love your mother, then, my boy, with a deeper and purer love than ever you have felt for her. Regard her with a tenderer interest. Do not mourn for me, for I shall not be altogether separated from you. They who truly love each other are ever spiritually present, though they may be absent as to body. I shall no longer be encumbered with a gross body, and shall therefore be, in affection, more intimately conjoined to you. Think often of this—think often of me, and this very thought will bring a degree of presence."

The feeble old man uttered this much, and then sunk back upon the bed, exhausted. At that moment she to whom he had been alluding came into the room, and approaching the bed-side, bent over her dying partner, with eyes dimmed by the waters of affection that would unseal their fountains. As she stood thus, he took her hand and placed it within that of his son, and pressing them both, said:

"Alfred, love your mother, and confide in her. You are just entering the world—a strange and evil world, with thousands of varied allurements and temptations. Trust much to your mother's experience and counsel. Never do any thing that she condemns or opposes, for, remember that she has ever loved you and cared for you, and must still continue to regard your good in all that she says or does. A mother who truly loves her son, has perceptions of right and wrong, far above his rational discriminations, especially when he is just entering upon life. Would that you might ever feel this truth, that a mother's affection for her child is like a sensitive plant, that perceives the slightest touch of that which might injure! But I need say no more—I know your love for her whose guardian care has ever been about you."

Weak physical nature sunk under this effort, and the old man closed his eyes, still clasping the hands of his two most beloved earthly objects within his own. For many minutes he lay in a deep calm, with his eyes closed. Neither the mother nor son attempted to withdraw their hands. At last the still apparent pressure of his fingers began to subside, and they perceived that his touch was growing colder. This aroused them to consciousness. He was dead!

We will not linger to picture the deep grief that weighed down the spirits of mother and son for months after he to whom their affections had clung for many years was removed from them. Gradually the keen edge of sorrow became less acute, as the cares of this world, from which none are free, pressed upon them, and demanded a due consideration.

Alfred Lennox, acting under the advice of his father who had devoted the best years of his life to legal pursuits, studied law as a profession under one of the most eminent jurists in Maryland. A few months before the death of his father he had been admitted to the Baltimore bar, and had already conducted one or two cases with no ordinary degree of tact and judgment.

On settling up his father's estate, of which he had been constituted, by the will, executor, he found that a very large investment which his father had made in stocks, was likely to prove a loss. Before he could make arrangements to sell, even at a sacrifice, the corporation which had issued the stock failed, leaving no assets to pay the holders of its script. This unlooked for event made it necessary for Alfred to devote himself more assiduously to his profession. Under the idea that they had a competence, he had felt only the impulse of a desire to be eminent in his profession urging him on—now he had the stronger power of necessity inciting him to activity. The consequence was, that he bent himself to his legal duties with an energy and industry that with his mind and education, could not but ensure him success.

It had not needed the dying injunction of Mr. Lennox to cause Alfred to be devoted to his mother. But that injunction had caused him to think more of her, and with a tenderer regard and more earnest solicitude. Before his father's death he had always consulted him, and had ever found him a judicious adviser. Now, he transferred his confidence to his mother—but with this difference, that he endeavored to aid her rational mind in the

consideration of a debated point, where action was required, by a full statement of all reasons pro and con that were presented to his own mind, leaving her to that intuitive perception of the true difference, for which the female mind, when not biased by selfish and evil affections, and sustained by man's rational faculty, is so remarkable. He did not, of course, as a man, lay aside his rationality, and allow himself to be blindly influenced. He only sought the aid of a woman's perceptions to enable him to see a doubtful point in a truly rational light. For he had been taught by his father this truth—that there are many things in which a woman's perceptions are more to be confided in than a man's reasonings.

This confidence drew him nearer to his mother, and caused her widowed heart to lift itself up with a new emotion of pleasure. Still, conscious of the evil that must beset the path of one so young, and altogether inexperienced in the world's ways, she felt for him a daily concern, that made her close in all her observations. But she was judicious in this carefulness. She was cautious not to make him feel restraint—nor to destroy his rational freedom; but, rather, to guard him by counsels that did not seem, and were not felt as such.

It is, alas! an evil world in which we live, and its evils are rendered tenfold more powerful in consequence of the reciprocal evils in ourselves; and often while we are guarding one point, the enemy is making a breach at another. It had never occurred to either Mr. Lennox or Alfred's mother, to warn him of the evils of intemperance, the dangers of which had not been so generally perceived and felt, as they have in later days. The rare cases of drunkenness which had occurred up to that period, rapidly increasing, however, about that time, had been looked upon as such degrading instances of human folly, that no one of the standing and moral purity of Alfred Lennox, was dreamed of as in danger. Liquors of various kinds were, therefore, habitually used as beverages; and it had become a custom of the young lawyers to meet frequently in convivial and wine drinking parties in various places, but most usually at some tavern where a room was hired for the purpose. Alfred being a favorite with the young men of the profession, was usually an invited guest at all of them, so that he was present at such parties almost every week. It pleased his mother to see him thus enjoying himself, for in that enjoyment she did not perceive the slightest danger.

This course of life continued for some two or three years, during which time young Lennox was fast rising into distinction, and acquiring an extensive practice. But, alas! during that time, habits had gradually been forming, that were ultimately to be his ruin. The keen zest with which a young man of buoyant mind enters into almost any thing that presents itself involving excitement and companionship is well known. And it greatly depends on his entrance into life, and upon the character of those who become his associates, whether he rises to honorable distinction, or becomes debased by the predominance of low and sensual appetites. Unfortunately for Alfred Lennox, his companions were not of the truly right stamp. Not that they were base and low; but because they too readily joined in the gratification of mere appetite and passion, and thus gradually bore each other downwards, instead of rising together in a mutual superiority over the grovelling power of sensuality.

Nothing had reached Mrs. Lennox's ears, or met her eyes, that warned her of the danger that was lurking in the path of her son. But she felt, at the end of the second year after her husband's death, that all was not right. The presence of Alfred, affectionate and attentive to her though he still remained, and though he still loved her with unabated tenderness, did not affect her so pleasantly as it had previously done. She seemed to feel, as she sat by his side, an emanation of something from him that was repulsive to her own pure and high feelings. It was not long afterwards that she noted something in the expression of his face that pained her—something indistinct, yet ever and anon recurring, that indicated a progressive change in his moral character, that her heart pronounced not good.

A sudden alarm was the consequence, rousing her mind into active observation. It was not long before she discovered a weakness that startled her with new and painful fears. She observed that his love of wine and brandy was increasing—that he drank double the quantity at dinner that he had been in the habit of taking a year before; and, also, that his mind was always a little excited, confused, or wandering after this indulgence. Still, it seemed so improbable that her son could ever become debased by drink, that she tried to dismiss from her heart the fear that oppressed it. But she could not. Every time she saw him recurring again and again to his wine or brandy and observed its effects upon him, her heart would sink in her bosom.

"You never stay at home with me now a single evening in the week, Alfred," she said to him, kindly, one evening about this time.

"It is true, mother," he replied, in a tone of affection, "but, then, I have so many engagements on my hands that it occupies all my time."

"Still, I cannot help thinking that you might spare me a single evening now and then. I am old now and lonely."

Mrs. Lennox's voice slightly trembled.

"I feel that I have done wrong, mother," Alfred said, after a pause. "I ought not to neglect you for any engagement. And I will not. To-night's engagement I will break and stay at home with you."

"No, Alfred, I will not have you fail to keep any engagement on my account," Mrs. Lennox said, in a more cheerful tone, for the prompt resolution of her son had re-assured her. "Go as you have promised. Hereafter I shall be glad to have your society whenever I can have it without interfering with your duties or your lawful recreations."

Alfred hesitated awhile; but, at length, urged by his mother, went out. He proceeded at once to a room in the Fountain Inn, Light street, where half a dozen young men were collected for a wine drinking frolic.

"Here's Lennox at last! Why, we've been waiting this half hour for you," said one, as he seated himself at the table, which was plentifully supplied with glasses.

"Why did you wait for me?" he asked.

"O, because we wish to start fair," was the reply. "I'm going to make every man here drunk to-night."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. I can drink more wine than any person in the room, and then walk home to my lodgings without staggering, while every one of you lies under the table as drunk as Bacchus."

"I can stand as much as you, I know," responded one.

"And so can I," added another.

"I'm not afraid," chimed in a third.

And so it ran around the table; no one showing any disposition to reject the challenge. Then the trial commenced at once between these young men, emulous of degradation. For a moment or two Alfred thought of his mother, and the interview

which he had just held with her; but the spirit of insane emulation that prevailed among his friends was almost instantly superinduced upon his own mind, and he was not only ready, but willing, and delighted, to enter upon the trial.

The consequence was, that at eleven o'clock, he fell from his chair perfectly intoxicated. One after another of his companions followed him, until only two remained, the challenger and another, who, though far gone, had just sense enough left to agree upon a truce, and then to go off home, leaving the others to take their drunken sleep out under the table.

It had been Mrs. Lennox's habit to retire at the usual hour, whether Alfred were in or not. But on this evening, she felt in hopes that he would return early, and therefore continued to sit up, expecting his return every moment, until the clock struck twelve.

"He ought not to stay out so late," she murmured to herself, the impropriety of his doing so, forcing itself strongly upon her mind.

Another hour passed away, and then she retired to her bed, and lay, listening an hour longer, in the hope of hearing him enter. Finally she fell asleep, but was frequently awakened, ere the morning broke, by troubled dreams. At day-dawn she arose, and ascertained that Alfred had returned. This was a relief to her mind—though the fact of his having staid out so late troubled her, she scarcely knew why.

When the bell rang for breakfast, Alfred came down. He had returned a little before daybreak, pretty well sobered, and deeply mortified at the result of his drinking frolic. His inclination was to lie down again and sleep off the effects of his debauch; but his anxiety to keep it from his mother's observation was so strong, that he roused himself up, and made every preparation that he could to meet her, so as to throw off any suspicion of the truth. But he could not disguise the too evident marks of a deep debauch, from which he was but partially recovered. One glance of his mother's eye, sufficed to tell her but too truly that her son had fallen.

The effect of this discovery upon her mind was too painful to be concealed. A moment or two she looked into his face, with a forced calmness—but nature was too powerful to be controlled. The tears gushed from her eyes; and rising, she left the table, and retired to her chamber.

"Mother!" he called after her, in a feeble, hesitating tone. But she did not hear him; or, hearing, did not pause at her name. Then he, likewise, arose from the table, and went into his own room, his mind oppressed with the keenest remorse. Conscious that his appearance was such, that to seek her presence would only add to her distress of mind, he threw himself upon his bed, and endeavored to lose himself in sleep. Still oppressed and sluggish from the effects of his debauch, he soon fell into a profound slumber, that lasted for several hours. When he awoke his mother was standing over him, and looking down into his face with an expression of tender solicitude, mingled with a look of suffering that deeply touched his feelings.

For some time after Mrs. Lennox had retired to her chamber, her mind was in a tumult of distress. None but a mother can imagine the anguish of her heart on making the discovery that her pure-minded, noble-spirited boy had fallen from the calm, rational dignity of manhood by a weak self-indulgence. And with this discovery, was the chilling fear, that, being once upon enchanted ground, no power could awaken him from his delusion. The paralyzing influence of such thoughts and feelings, could not long remain. A sense of duty aroused her.

"What can I do? What must I do?" were questions hard to answer. Still, she must act. Danger was lurking in the path of her son, and she must, if possible, so make him sensible of that danger, as to arouse him into watchfulness.

It was nearly an hour after she had retired abruptly, as has been stated, to her room, that she found herself sufficiently composed to leave it. On coming down stairs, she was greatly relieved to find that Alfred had not gone out. She did not inquire for him, for she was particularly anxious not to have, if possible, the attention of the servants directed to his aberration. Not finding him in the parlor, she concluded that he was in his chamber, and, perhaps, asleep. But, as hour after hour passed away, and he did not appear, her anxiety about him increased to such an extent that she could not rest until she had seen him, and learned something of his state of mind. She therefore went to his chamber, and tapped lightly upon the door. No answer following, she tapped again and again, with no better success.

"He is asleep, and I will not disturb him," she said, and so retired again to her own room. The very tenderness of her affec-

tion now caused her to begin to make excuses for him. She reasoned, that, like hundreds of other young men, he had been led on to drink, unsuspectingly, until he was overcome. He had spoken of an engagement for the previous evening, which was doubtless with some of his male companions, with whom he had lingered too long over the wine.

Thus she comforted herself, and excused him, her anxiety to meet him increasing every moment. It was not long before she was again tapping at his room door, but with no better success. Finding that he did not answer, it was suddenly suggested to her mind that he might not be there. Instantly she opened the door and entered. He was lying in a deep sleep upon the bed, his face flushed, and his breathing hard. The air of the room was oppressed with the vile odor of his breath, the inhalation of which made his mother sick. Stepping lightly to the windows, she opened them, and after letting the room get thoroughly ventilated, closed them again, and went and stood over him. His face had already become paler, and his respiration less deep and oppressive. The pure air had already imparted its healthy influence.

"Alfred, my son!" she said in a low, earnest voice, laying her hand gently upon him.

But his ear was too deeply sealed. He could not hear her.

"Alfred, Alfred!" she called, still louder.

Her voice was now evidently heard, for he aroused partially, in which state he lay for some time, consciousness gradually returning. At length he opened his eyes, and saw his mother bending over him. But he quickly closed them again, and for some moments endeavored to collect his scattered senses.

"Alfred, my son!" Mrs. Lennox said, tenderly.

That low, earnest tone, full of maternal pathos, thrilled upon his heart. He felt that it was a tone of forgiveness, but mingled with grief. It touched the fountains of emotion, and the waters could not be restrained. Mrs. Lennox saw the quivering of his closed eyelids, and then the drops oozing forth, the tokens of repentance.

"My dear child!" she murmured, stooping down and kissing him. "Let this one lesson be a sufficient warning."

"It is—it shall be!" he whispered, the tears now gushing forth, and rolling in large pure drops over his cheeks.

"Then, Alfred, let the past be thought of—not with remorse

that gives present unhappiness, but with a resolution fixed and immutable never again to be charmed by the voice of a deluding Syren—never again to have your garments soiled."

"Can you forgive me, mother, this first and last departure from a right path—that path in which you have so steadily guided my early footsteps?" the young man asked, looking up into his mother's face.

"You are already forgiven, Alfred," was her reply. "Only guard yourself in future, and the past will soon cease to be remembered by me with pain. If again tempted, think of the widowed mother resigned to your care by a dying father. Recur to that parting scene, and surely no temptation can again overcome you."

Thus soothed and encouraged, Alfred Lennox gradually recovered himself. From that time he was more attentive to his mother, and remained at home with and read to her more frequently in the evening. But his painful feelings in thinking of his debauch, arose principally from the fact that his mother had discovered its effect upon him. Had she known nothing of it, he would have felt little concerned about the matter, and recurred to it only to laugh with his gay companions.

As to the use of liquors, he did not dream of abating that in any degree, except in the presence of his mother, to whom he plainly perceived that it gave pain. What he abated in her presence was, however, made up when out of it. As often as half a dozen times a day would he resort to the tavern with some two or three of his professional and other friends to drink, and as frequently during the evenings meet them at wine parties and oyster suppers. But he was careful not to permit himself again to lose his consciousness. Thus he succeeded in completely blinding his mother, to whom he increased his kind attentions—not hypocritically, for he loved her as she deserved to be loved, purely and tenderly. He deceived her only because he knew that she would esteem his course of life an exceedingly dangerous one, and he did not wish to give her unnecessary pain. As for himself, he had no fears on the subject.

But he had great cause of fear. He had never calculated the power of habit, although, like others, he could utter and admit the adage, that "habit is second nature." It must not here be imagined, that Lennox was abating his professional zeal—that he

was forming to himself a new and admitted end of life. Not so. He was still a legal student of great industry, and was rapidly rising into eminence, not by the overpowering and dazzling brilliancy of genius, but by the strong, clear, steady light of a well-balanced, well-furnished intellect. A good cause placed in his hands was sure of success, because his mind, acting upon truth, was like a burning glass, revealing in intenser light every minute particular. In a word, he was the pride and first promise of the Baltimore Bar.

At the age of twenty-six, he became deeply attached to Florence R——, the daughter of a wealthy merchant. That affection was plainly reciprocated, although no declaration had yet been made on his part. After consultation with his mother, as to the young lady's true character and fitness for a wife—for in this matter he felt willing to confide in her judgment and close observation—he concluded to make proposals, and did so accordingly. He was referred by Florence to her father.

"Mr. R——," he said, waiting on that gentleman, with the genuine frankness of his character, "I wish to say to you, and without preliminaries, that I find myself deeply attached to your daughter Florence. Will you consent to our marriage?"

Alfred had expected a prompt and cordial assent, but he was mistaken.

"Allow me a week to consider your proposition, Mr. Lennox," was the grave reply. "My daughter is very dear to me, and I cannot part with her lightly."

"All perfectly right," Lennox endeavored to say with a cheerful air, but his heart sunk within him. He perceived doubt in the tone of Mr. R——'s voice, and, he thought, disapprobation in the expression of his countenance. This he could not understand. His position in society was as good as that of Mr. R——, his character as fair, and his reputation at the Bar high, and still rapidly rising. It was all a strange mystery. He had supposed that his offer would have been met promptly and gladly. For a time his wounded pride resolved to give up all idea of Florence—to cast her aside. But this he could not do. The doubt thus unexpectedly thrown over his prospect of obtaining her, increased ten-fold his love, and made him ten times more desirous of possessing her.

As soon as Alfred had left the house, Mr. R.—— sought his

daughter's room, where she had retired with a trembling heart, to await the result of an interview, the meaning of which she well imagined.

"Florence, my child," he said, seating himself by her side, and taking her trembling hand within his own, "since your mother's death, have you ever felt for a single moment that your father did not love you, and care for your happiness with a constant care?"

"No, dear father," she replied, looking up into his face, while the tears came to her eyes. "Why do you ask?"

Mr. R—— felt that her hand trembled within his still more.

"Be calm, my dear," he said, "I see that you are conscious of the subject upon which I am going to converse with you. In speaking of it to each other then, let us lay aside all reserve. Tell me, then, in the beginning, do you feel an affection for Mr. Lennox?"

"I cannot deny it, father."

"How long have you felt this sentiment, Florence?"

"It has been growing upon me for some time," replied the blushing maiden; "but so insensibly, that I hardly dared to acknowledge it to myself, until he made to me a declaration of a like sentiment."

"And what reply did you make him?" was Mr. R——'s quick interrogation.

"I referred him to you, sir, of course."

"Without acknowledging a kindred sentiment?"

"Not by words, father."

Mr. R—— paused a few moments, and then resumed:

"Suppose, my dear, that I were to object to your marriage with him, do you think that you could weigh, rationally, my reasons for so doing?"

"I do not know, father," Florence said, leaning her head upon his arm, as she hid her face with her hands, and gave way to an involuntary gush of tears.

The heart of Mr. R—— was moved. He knew the power of the sentiment that it was too evident had been formed in her mind. He knew the affectionate nature of his child, and was conscious, that if once her love were called out and placed unworthily, she would be robbed of happiness, it might be of hope. Under this feeling he hardly knew what to say, or how to

act. After a long silence, as the agitation of Florence's mind began to subside, her father said—

"You are aware, my dear, that, in many instances, we see only the appearance of truth around us. That it is often hard to judge of a man's real character. That——"

"Dear father, speak out plainly," Florence said, looking up, earnestly, into her father's face. Surely you cannot mean that Mr. Lennox is not a man of good character?"

"Perhaps that would be too strong a term, Florence. Still, to speak out plainly, I do not think that you would be happy as the wife of Alfred Lennox."

"O father! why do you say so? I am sure Alfred is all that is excellent."

"My dear child, I appreciate your feelings. But do you not think, that as a man with my years and experience, I ought to be able to judge of another man's true character much better than you?"

"I certainly do, father."

"And are you not willing to repose some confidence in my judgment?"

"Have I not always confided in it?"

"You have, Florence. And I trust are still willing to confide in it, especially in a matter of so much moment."

"But you will not exact a blind confidence?"

"No, my dear child, I will not. Nor did I intend to exact such a confidence. I am glad that your mind has made the discrimination."

"Then, father, let me hear plainly why you think I would not be happy as the wife of Mr. Lennox?"

"Because, I am afraid that he is forming bad habits. I do not like the company he keeps."

"Do you know that he is forming bad habits?"

"If I can form any judgment from appearances, I certainly think that he is. I have employed him to conduct for me a very important suit, and have, in consequence, frequent interviews with him. The more I see of him, the more I am inclined to think that his habits are not good."

This did not seem to satisfy Florence.

"Is it not possible, father," she said, after a few moments' silence, "that you may have a prejudice against him, that is not based upon any rational ground?"

"No, my dear, I can safely say that I have not: for I know of no young man whom I would rather see your husband than he, were I satisfied in respect to his habits of life."

"May not your suspicions be groundless?"

"It is barely possible that they may. But, if we are to judge of a man's character by the company he keeps, Alfred Lennox is far from being above suspicion. You know L——?"

"Yes."

"They are often together and seem to be intimate."

"Is it possible!" with a look of painful surprise.

"It is too true. Charles S——, is also another of his associates, who is known to be dissipated, frolicsome, and to bear a very immoral character."

"O father, I could not have believed it."

"And worse than all, he is said to drink too hard for a young man of his age. You could not, certainly, run the fearful risk of becoming the wife of a drunkard!"

"Not after having witnessed the heart-aching grief of my aunt Anna," was the reply of Florence.

"I am glad you have alluded to your aunt," Mr. R—— said. "She was warned by me as I am now warning you. She was my youngest sister, and the favorite of us all; but was unwilling to confide in my judgment in a matter where her affections were concerned. I knew the man who addressed her to be addicted to the vice of immoderate drinking, and I warned her not to marry him. But she would not hear to me; but went so far as to tell him what I had alleged against him, thus making him my bitter enemy. I need not tell you the result in her case."

"But do you think that Mr. Lennox is as far gone as was my uncle when aunt Anna married him?"

"No, my dear, I do not. But what then?"

"You know what I would say, father!"

"I believe I do, Florence. But are you willing to run so great a risk?"

"You know not, father, how deeply my happiness is involved"——

Her voice trembled, and was so husky that she could not finish the sentence.

"I know it, Florence, and I feel it; and for your sake I will make the most careful investigation of his character. When I have done so, will you confide in my judgment?"

"I feel that it is right that I should, my dear father; and, be the result what it may, I promise that I will."

"Spoken like my own dear child!" Mr. R—— said, drawing her to his bosom, and kissing her fervently.

The maiden rested confidingly there for a few moments, and then, rising, retired to her own chamber, where, sinking upon her bed, she burst into a flood of tears. It was a hard task, indeed, that she had set for her young and innocent heart.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lennox left the house of Mr. R—— with his mind in a tumult. A week! How could he endure such a suspense, especially where so strong a doubt had been cast over the issue. He retired to his office, and throwing himself into a chair, gave way to gloomy thoughts. As he sat thus, a friend came in, and observing the change in his appearance said—

"In the name of wonder, Alfred, what has come over you?"

"I've got the blues, if you know what they are?" he replied, half laughing, as he endeavored to rally himself.

"The blues? I rather think that I do know something about them. But you?—what has given you the blues?"

"As to the cause, that is no matter. But do you know how to cure them?"

"I know various modes of relief. But it takes time for the performance of a perfect cure."

"So I should think—and even then the prescription may fail. How, then, is temporary relief to be obtained?"

"I have never found anything so efficacious as a good Tom and Jerry."

Lennox shook his head.

"Even a strong brandy punch is salutary."

"Then come and let us have one."

His friend needed no second invitation, and so they proceeded to a tavern and called for a couple of brandy punches. These disposed of, and a little time given for the influence to become manifest, another was taken by each, and then another. Both then returned to the office of Lennox, where they chatted about various matters for half an hour or so, until the subject of the young lawyer's most important suit at last came up. When the wine is in, the wit is out, all know to be true. So it proved with Lennox. Three glasses were enough to make him indiscreet, and so he detailed to his friend the particulars of his love for Flor-

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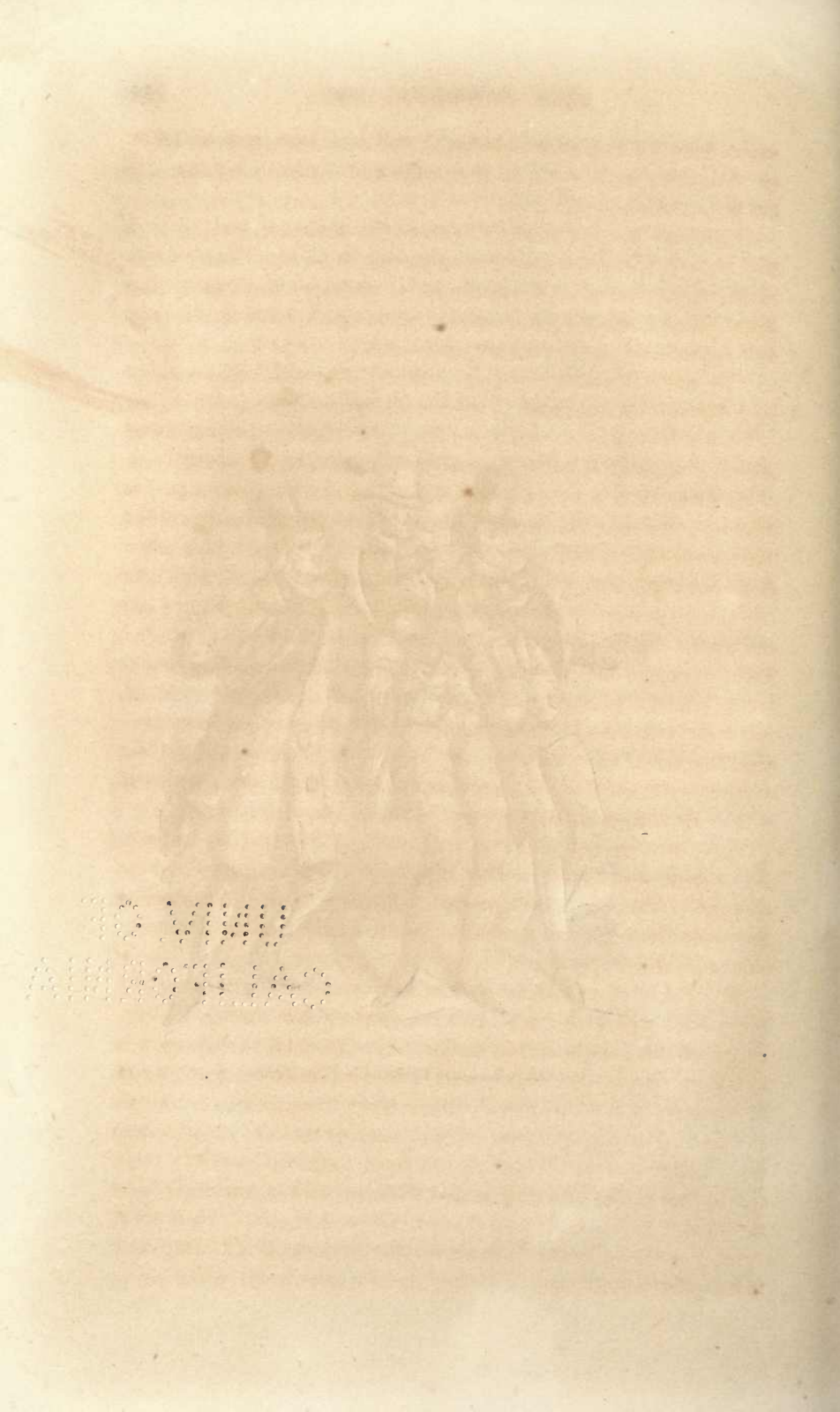

ence—how he had offered himself, and had been put off for a week—with sundry childish declarations of his undying love for the beautiful maiden.

His friend laughed in his sleeve at his weakness, and advised him to keep his spirits up, by pouring spirits down. This advice he literally followed. When he came home to tea that evening Mrs. Lennox noted with exquisite pain, that he was more than half intoxicated, and acted very strangely.

"Do not go out this evening, Alfred," she said, as he took up his hat after tea, and made a movement towards the door.

"I can 't stay in to-night, mother," he replied, turning away with a gesture of impatience, and hastily quitting the house.

In so unkind a tone Alfred had never before spoken to his mother. She saw that he had been drinking, and was thus able to account for the change. But for a mother *thus* to excuse her son—her only son, and she a widow! Slowly, and with her head drooping on her bosom, did Mrs. Lennox steal away to her chamber. Here she sunk upon her knees, and lifted up her heart in prayer for strength to bear up under an affliction that it seemed would crush her to the earth. Then, as a degree of calmness stole over her spirit she prayed for her erring child, beseeching with intense fervor that he might be checked in his course, ere it were too late—ere he brought down the gray hairs of his widowed mother in sorrow to the grave.

Thus did she endeavor to rest upon the Strong for strength. But nature was active within her, and its claims could not be silenced. Though calmer, and still looking upwards in hope as she arose from her knees, yet her heart ached with an indescribable anguish.

As for Alfred, as soon as he had left the house he repaired to Malcom's, where he met three or four of his young friends. They saw his condition, but had not the discretion to discourage him from any further indulgence. On the contrary, they joined him at once in a social glass. Then they drew up to a table and commenced a conversation on the current events of the day. More liquor was called for, and as they continued to drink, their spirits rose higher and higher, and their voices with their spirits—the loudest voice of all was that of Alfred Lennox. Thus they spent the whole evening, much to the annoyance of other and more quiet visitors.

It was about ten o'clock that Lennox became conscious that an eye was upon him—the steady, searching eye of old Mr. R——, who was seated at a table near by, apparently engaged in reading a newspaper; but really all eye and all ear to the sayings and doings of himself and his wild companions. Drunk as he was, he could not misunderstand the meaning of the look which Mr. R—— cast upon him as their eyes met. Instantly rising, he passed up to where the old man was sitting, and, bending down to his ear, said in an earnest whisper,

"Do not judge altogether from appearances, Mr. R——. Young blood is a little warm sometimes."

"If we are not to judge from appearances, Mr. Lennox, how are we to arrive at any just conclusions?" was the old man's cold reply, while his countenance assumed a sterner aspect.

For a moment or two Lennox stood silent, and in painful irresolution; then turning away, he sought the door, and left thus abruptly the house and his companions.

"Fool! fool!" he ejaculated bitterly, as he strode along the streets, more than half sobered by the incident that had just occurred.

Homeward he turned his steps, and entered, at an early hour for him, much to the relief of one waiting and troubled heart. But she knew not the wild agitation of his bosom, nor dreamed in her quiet sleep that her son was tossing, nearly all the night, upon a waking pillow.

In the morning, when he came down to breakfast, his pale and anxious countenance instantly attracted the eye of his mother.

"Are you not well, Alfred?" she asked, with anxious solicitude.

"Not very well," he replied, evasively.

"Is there nothing that I can do for you, Alfred?"

"No, mother, I have a difficult case on hand, which troubles my mind exceedingly. It has kept me awake nearly all night, which will account to you for my appearance. Of course you cannot abate that cause."

"What suit is it, Alfred?"

"The suit of old Mr. R——. It will be reached on the docket to-morrow."

"But why need you be so troubled about that?"

"There is more than one reason why I should feel uneasiness.

The case is one of great difficulty, and I am more than half convinced that justice is not on the side of my client. With a bad cause I am weak. My conscience troubles me when I feel that I am in the position of an oppressor of the innocent."

"Better lose such a cause than gain it, then, Alfred."

"If I were satisfied that Mr. R——'s claim was unjust, and there were no other consideration in the way, I should not feel as I do, in the prospect of losing it. But you know that I have offered for the hand of his daughter."

"True, Alfred, and you have never spoken to me of the result of that offer."

"He has put me off for a week, and, in the mean time, this suit comes on. I have a presentiment, that, upon the result of this suit, will depend the other."

"I do not think so," Mrs. Lennox replied, "I have known Mr. R—— for many years, and am satisfied that he cannot act in so important a matter as the marriage of Florence upon such grounds. He loves her too much."

"I wish I could think so, mother; but I cannot," was the young man's desponding reply. The reader is aware that he had another cause of fear, to which he dared not allude.

At eleven o'clock he was to have a professional interview with Mr. R——. In looking forward to it, he felt nervous and agitated. In leaving his home, it was with a tacit resolution that he would drink nothing until after his interview with his client. But his mind was so unsettled, and his nerves so unstrung, that he felt compelled to fortify himself with a strong glass of brandy. This had the desired effect, and he was enabled to meet Mr. R—— with composure, and to enter on the business in hand with some degree of coolness and rationality. But the mind of Mr. R—— being keenly observant, now that he had a double reason for close scrutiny, he readily detected the effect of the single strong potation that the young lawyer had taken, in an elevation of the mind above its natural calm, healthy tone. When the interview closed, he was more than ever satisfied that the young man stood in a position of great danger, and less willing than ever that his daughter should risk her hopes and happiness by a union with him.

On the next morning, the case, involving many thousands of dollars, came up It was opened by Lennox, in his usual calm

and comprehensive manner. He brought out the different points of dispute in a clear and apparent light, displaying, as he did so, his legal knowledge and professional tact in beautiful style. Mr. R—— was charmed with the effort made by the young man, and, at the same time, deeply pained that one formed as he was for esteem and usefulness should be treading a path of so much doubt and danger. The opponent of Lennox was a particular friend, or so Lennox esteemed him—a calm, cool, observant man, who was deeply read in human nature. None could sooner see a weak point in an adversary, and none knew better how to take advantage of it, than he. Nor was he at all scrupulous as to the mode of gaining this advantage. His name was Balford.

At the close of the morning session the advantage was clearly on the side of Lennox, who had managed the case with even more than his usual talent and skill. This Balford plainly saw. Running his arm within that of Lennox, as the latter emerged from the court room, he said, in a tone of affected concern,

"Really, Lennox, I am afraid that you are not going to leave me a single stone to stand upon."

"I certainly shall not, if in my power to knock them from under your feet," was the half exulting reply.

"All fair of course. You are not going home to dine, I presume?" Balford added, after a brief pause.

"Why not?"

"I never burden my stomach when I have an important cause to argue after dinner. Do you?"

"I always dine, as usual."

"There you are in error," Balford said. "I merely take a glass of wine or two, and a cracker, thus leaving my body free from the labor of nutrition, which draws off too much energy from the brain, while the slight portion of food and stimulating drink that I take, keeps me up, and enables me to think with even more than ordinary clearness."

"That is all new to me—but it seems rational," Lennox replied. "But are you not exhausted when night comes?"

"Of course, to some degree. But then who would not be willing to bear a little physical exhaustion, to obtain a legal triumph?"

"Very true. And I believe I will follow your example," the young man said.

"Then come with me," urged the tempter. "I have some delightful wine, with crackers and cheese, at my office."

Lennox did not pause for a second invitation. It was not long before they were joined by two or three well-known friends, all lovers of good wine, who seemed to come "understandingly." In good company, Lennox always forgot himself. The consequence was, that after the passage of two hours, he was just in the condition that his friend Balford always desired to have an opponent in an important case. At four o'clock the court re-assembled, and Lennox took the floor. During the morning, there had been the examination of witnesses, with a lucid summing up of the evidence given. Now the grand effort was to come off in which the true points of issue were to be brought out and exhibited in such a light as to enable the court to give an equitable decision.

The young lawyer had not uttered ten words, before Mr. R——, who was observing him closely, saw, with alarm and sincere grief, that he was not in the calm, sane state that he had been in during the morning—that he was, in fact, half intoxicated. For a few minutes he argued with himself the propriety of asking a postponement of the case, on the ground of the present incapacity of his counsel. But he hesitated to do so, and, for a while, kept his mind in a negative position in regard to the matter. As Lennox went on, however, it became so plain that, instead of bringing out into apparent light the true merits of his case, he was confusing it, and making success more and more doubtful at every step of his progress. Mr. R—— at last went up to the Bench, and whispered to one of the judges his fears, on account of the condition of Lennox, and begged to have the case postponed. The reasonableness of the request was so apparent, that the judges, after a moment's consultation, asked Lennox to take his seat for a moment. One of them stated that, at the request of a party concerned, the case was postponed until the next morning at ten o'clock, at which time he hoped counsel would come *properly* prepared to enter upon the discussion of the question under consideration.

There was not one present, Lennox among the rest, who did not fully understand the meaning of this unexpected interruption.

As for himself, he had already become conscious that he was unfit to conduct the case. He glided from the court-room with-

out pausing to speak to any one, and hurrying home, retired to his chamber overwhelmed with pain and mortification. On the next day, he went to the court-house fully prepared to act his part. He was never more sober and rational in his life. Fully convinced of the base part that had been acted towards him by the antagonist counsel, his mind rose into double activity under the determination to retrieve himself, and disappoint his unmanly opponent. The consequence was, that he acquitted himself with a power and brilliancy rarely equalled at that Bar, and so fully sustained his cause, even though his mind had at first been oppressed under a sense that there was not equity on his side, that, when the court re-assembled in the afternoon, a unanimous decision was rendered in favor of his client.

"You certainly sustained yourself handsomely, Mr. Lennox," said Mr. R——, coming up to him and taking his hand, after the decision had been given. "But, my dear sir, remember that it takes many successful efforts to redeem one failure such as you made yesterday."

"I am aware of that, Mr. R——," Lennox replied. "But it is only just to myself that I should state that I was tricked into the condition I was then in, by Balford."

"How?"

"He invited me to his office after the morning session, and with an apparent show of kindness advised me not to go home to my dinner, as a full meal would oppress and confuse my mind, but to take a cracker and a glass of wine with him. I was deceived by this pretended interest, and thrown at once into a pleasant company, which I have no doubt was purposely invited to his office. The consequence was, that I drank too much wine on an empty stomach."

"A base act truly, Mr. Lennox! But remember, that where there is no ground for temptation, we cannot be successfully assailed by even the most subtle temper."

This remark was felt by Lennox, and slightly offended him. He did not reply, and Mr. R—— bade him good-day and left him. The remembrance of what had occurred at Malcom's oyster-house, and the failure, from intoxication, on the previous day, both occurring while his suit for the hand of Florence was pending, was enough to keep him sober, at least until the end of the time specified by old Mr. R—— when an answer to his appli-

cation was to be given. For her sake he would most cheerfully have renounced the wild pleasures of convivial companionship. He called himself a fool and a madman, for the weakness he had already displayed, tending, he feared, utterly to destroy his hope of ever gaining over the affectionate regard of the old man for his darling and only child. At last the lingering term expired, and with a trembling heart he repaired to the residence of Mr. R—— to hear the word that he felt was to make or mar him for life.

"I have much to fear—fool that I have been!" he murmured to himself, as he paused at the door of her who was truly beloved by him with a most ardent and deep affection.

The servant showed him into the parlor, where sat old Mr. R——, who arose on his entrance, and received him with much kindness.

"You know for what I have come, Mr. R——," Lennox said, as soon as he was seated. "Do not, then, keep me in suspense —I cannot bear it. Say, then, do you favor my suit?"

"It grieves me, my young friend, to say that I do not," Mr. R—— replied, still kindly, and indeed in a tone of affection.

"May I ask the reason, sir!" Alfred said, with forced calmness.

"You have certainly a right to know the reason, Mr. Lennox; and, therefore, I do not feel at liberty to withhold it, much as it may pain me to utter the truth. For your talents I have great respect—nay, admiration. The general moral tone of your feelings I like. Your father was one of my earliest and firmest friends. But your habits, sir! I dare not trust a man of your habits with my child!"

Alfred did not for a time attempt to reply. He was conscious that Mr. R—— had good reasons for judging thus of him, although he felt that the judgment was a harsh one, and the danger apprehended altogether out of the question. His first impulse under the promptings of wounded pride was to leave the house without another word, and thus abandon all hope of ever calling the hand of Florence his own. But his heart yearned towards her with too intense an affection thus to give her up, and without another effort.

"I admit, Mr. R——," he at length said with forced calmness, "that from one or two things which have recently fallen

under your observation, you are authorized to judge of me with a rigorous judgment. But you know under what circumstances at least one of those aberrations occurred."

"I do, Mr. Lennox. But that only makes me the more fearful. Had there not been on your part a habit, already acquired, of drinking to excess, Mr. Balford would never have thought of tempting you. The success of his efforts indicates the dangerous strength of that habit."

"But surely, Mr. R——," the young man urged, "you do not intend cutting me off at once from hope?"

"I do, Mr. Lennox," was the decided answer. "Both myself and Florence have calmly weighed the subject, and our decided and positive conclusion is, not to accept your offer."

The young man rose slowly from his seat, and bowing low and silently, left the house, his mind in a fever of excitement such as he had never known. To drown this, he went to a tavern and drank to intoxication. It was a whole week after, before he again drew a sober breath. What his mother suffered during that time, it would be vain to attempt to describe. But the intensity of her mental anguish rose almost to delirium, when news was brought to her, under the hope that her influence over her son would check his mad resolution, that he had challenged to mortal combat the lawyer against whom he had recently carried the important case to which we have just alluded.

The duel was to take place at Bladensburg, on the day succeeding the night when the terrible news was communicated to her. Her son was out, and did not return until nearly twelve o'clock. Then he was half intoxicated, and she felt that remonstrance would be vain. All night long did she pace the floor of her chamber, the wild anguish of her spirit rendering her insensible to physical exhaustion. Early in the morning her son was to leave on his fatal errand, and she must, if there were power in a mother's deep affection over her child, prevent him from executing his revengeful purpose. At day-dawn she descended to the parlor to await his appearance. She had been there only for a short time, when he came stealthily down the stairs.

"Mother!" he ejaculated in surprise, as he entered the parlor.

"Alfred, you must not go," she said firmly, while she looked him steadily in the face.

"Go where, mother?"

"Do not attempt to deceive me, Alfred," she replied, in the same calm voice. "I know all about your destination this morning. But your mother says that you must not go—and surely you will not disobey her injunction!"

"You know not what you say, mother," the young man responded, bitterly.

"You will not go, surely, Alfred," she said, her tone and manner changing, "now that you are aware that I know your errand. Do you think that I could live through the suspense of this day?"

"I could curse the miserable wretch who told this tale," the young man uttered between his teeth, as he commenced pacing the room backwards and forwards.

"Say you will not go," urged his mother.

"I cannot say that, for I must go," was the gloomy reply.

"O, say not so! Say not so, Alfred! Let there be no blood upon your hands. Let me not be robbed of my all in this world!"

"Mother, you know not what you say," urged the young man. "I have been deeply and fatally disgraced and injured. Life has been rendered a burden to me by that man—and I will be revenged, or die!"

"O, talk not so wildly, Alfred! Is there no one in the whole world to be considered but yourself? Is all regard and affection gone for your mother, who looks up to you, and reclines upon you as the only prop to sustain her? Think of these trembling limbs, this weakened body, fast declining, and forbear. Think of your mother's wounded and bruised spirit, and pause ere your rash step be taken."

"Mother! mother! you will drive me mad!" the young man suddenly exclaimed, striking his hand upon his forehead.

"Let me urge you, by all the tenderest and dearest considerations, to forbear," continued Mrs. Lennox, beseechingly.

"Mother, you must not speak to me thus!" he said, interrupting her, in an excited tone. "You are only drugging the cup, of which I must drink, with intenser bitterness. I cannot pause—I cannot look back. My honor is at stake—and honor to me is dearer than life."

And so saying, he turned away and made a movement towards the door.

"Alfred you must not go!" Mrs. Lennox exclaimed, springing to his side, and grasping his arm tightly. "You must not—you shall not go!"

"Mother, you know not what you are doing," he said, gently disengaging himself. Then leading her back, he seated her upon the sofa, and turning, glided away, and was out of the house before she had time to recover herself.

She did not attempt to follow, for she felt that to do so would be vain. All through the awful day no one came near her. Alone she awaited the fearful result, that would bring her, perhaps, the lifeless body of her beloved son—or return him with his hand stained by the blood of his fellow. Slowly did the hours creep by, each marking some indelible line of pain upon her over-burdened heart. As the day began to decline, a stupor came over her spirit. Nature seemed to be exhausted. But towards evening, when it was time for Alfred to return, if he were ever to return alive, her anxiety arose to its highest pitch of intensity. Like a restless spirit, she wandered from room to room, ever and anon going to the door and looking up the street with an earnest gaze.

Moment after moment, minute after minute, and hour after hour continued to glide away, until the dim twilight began to fall around, and still he came not. Weak and faint with fear, anxiety and suspense, she at last sank upon a chair. She had remained there for about five minutes, when the hall door was suddenly thrown open, and quick feet hurried along the passage. She could not rise, nor speak, nor make a sound. But her suspense was brief. Alfred rushed in, and sinking down by her side, burst into tears.

"My son—my son!" she could only murmur, when overtried nature gave way, and she became insensible.

The duel had resulted in the death of Balford, who was shot down at the first fire, and died before he could be taken from the ground. Overwhelmed with a terrible remorse, Lennox returned home, tempted strongly to the commission of suicide. The fainting condition of his mother aroused him in some degree, and called out his thoughts from himself in care for another. It was more than an hour before Mrs. Lennox was restored to consciousness under the careful attentions of the family physician. Then she was so feeble that she was forbidden to hold any intercourse

with her son, who retired to his chamber, a prey to the most gloomy reflections. For an hour he paced the room to and fro, and at length, as the agony of his mind grew more intense, he went forth into the open air, and wandered for a long time about the streets. When he returned home, his mind and body were both stupefied. He had drank deeply for the purpose of relief.

We will not attempt to portray his feelings, nor those of his mother when they met on the next morning, and she became conscious that the hands of her son were imbued with the blood of his fellow-man. She saw the anguish of his spirit, and therefore spoke no word of censure—but she could not utter one of comfort. Although they went through the form of sitting down to the morning meal, yet no food passed the lips of either; nor was any subject of conversation introduced. Silently and oppressed in spirit, they rose, at length, from the table, like mere automata, she passing up to her chamber, and he from the house, neither under the direction of any specific end. His steps, however, were soon bent towards a drinking-house. He felt that he must seek relief in the stupefaction of his senses; and with this object in view, he drank deeply. By one o'clock he was brought home drunk and insensible! During many weeks from that day, he was constantly under the benumbing influence of liquor, which finally ended in a horrible, half-conscious delirium.

From this, under judicious medical treatment, he at length awakened. But the energy of his character was gone; and, for a time, his intellect seemed impaired. This was so apparent, that few thought of intrusting him with a case of much importance, and he, of course, soon sunk from the position he had acquired at the bar, without making a single effort to regain it. Gradually he fell into habits of idleness, and a regular course of dissipation. He was rarely employed in anything above an assault and battery, or a magistrate's case, and these yielded him but a slender income, every cent of which he squandered in drinking and frolicking.

In this course of life he had indulged for some two years, gradually sinking lower and lower, when, as he had become active in politics, and was a fine speaker, he was nominated as a candidate for the legislature. It needed but this to complete his ruin, although many of his friends hoped that its effect upon him would be salutary. Elections then, as they have been too often since,

mortifying as the admission may be, were carried by drinking. An electioneering campaign resembled, in some respect, the Bacchanalian orgies of old, rather than a general rational movement of the people, preparatory to an expression of their honest sentiments at the polls.

Into this whirlpool of excitement, Alfred Lennox entered with a keen zest. It enabled him, in some degree, to rise above the paralyzing influence of two most active causes of depression and unhappiness—the loss of Florence R——, whom he had truly and tenderly loved, and the death of Balford, which rested heavily upon his conscience. Four months of active service in this kind of life, during all of which time he was under strong excitement, ended in a defeat. Of course, he sunk at once into a condition of almost hopeless dissipation. For six weeks after the election, he came home every night so intoxicated as hardly to be able to find his way to bed.

Such a course of life, united with petty gambling, where there was little or no income of his own to sustain it, necessarily drew upon the funds still under his control, as executor of his father's estate, which had already been greatly reduced, as stated, by the failure of a joint stock company, in which large investments had been made. In examining into this account one day, when his mind was less under the influence of artificial excitement than usual, he was alarmed to discover that there remained but about fifteen thousand dollars of his father's handsome property, and that there was less than one hundred dollars in the bank. The house in which they lived was valued at eight thousand dollars—thus leaving property from which an income could be derived of only seven thousand dollars, which netted six hundred dollars per annum.

Startled at this discovery, and conscious that it could not long be concealed from his mother, unless he changed his habits, and made a strong effort to increase, through his profession, the annual income, he struggled for some weeks in the effort to reform. This did not become fully apparent to his now heart-broken mother, who was sadly altered, and rapidly sinking in health and spirits, until the passage of two or three days. She had noticed that he did not go out as usual on one or two evenings, but, as he retired to his room, and thus avoided her, she hoped little from the change. On the third evening, she could not but notice that

there was a great difference in his appearance and manner towards her. He was unusually kind, and seemed anxious to do something to chase from her brow the cloud of sorrow that ever rested there.

"Shall I read something to you, mother?" he said, laying his hand upon a book.

"Alfred?" And she looked him steadily in the face, while her own countenance changed rapidly in its expression.

"I know what you would say, mother," he replied after a pause, "and I will anticipate your question. I trust that I have at last awakened from a wild, delirious dream. Three days ago I made a vow that I would stop short in the mad career I had been running. And I have stopped. Since then I have been sober and rational, and in every way a far happier man. And from this day forth, I am resolved to remain sober and rational."

Ere he had finished speaking Mrs. Lennox had risen from her chair and sprung to his side; and now her arms were around him, and her tears were falling fast upon his bowed head.

"The Lord help you to keep that resolution, my son!" she at length said in a low and solemn tone, lifting her eyes and hands upwards.

A few moments of breathless silence followed, during which both hearts were lifted to Heaven in deep aspirations for aid above mere human strength to sustain the erring one in the hour of temptation. Then the mother sunk exhausted on a chair, feeling as weak and helpless almost as an infant. The sudden and strong reaction of a newly awakened hope, was too powerful for her feeble body, weakened by age and heart-searching trouble.

"O, Alfred," she said, after she had recovered, in some degree, the tone of her mind, "you can never know how much I have suffered in the last few years. I wonder, sometimes, how I have lived through it."

"Do not allude to that, mother," he replied, while an expression of pain passed over his face. "I dare not think of these things—when I do it seems as if I would be driven to desperation. Wretch! miserable, heartless wretch that I have been!"

The strong agony pictured in the face of her son, alarmed Mrs. Lennox, and she soothed him as best she could.

"Read to me, Alfred," she at length said. "You know how much I love to have you read to me."

The young man opened a volume and read for more than an hour, and then, after some pleasant conversation on the subject of the book, both retired for the night, with happier hearts than had beaten in their bosoms for many and many a day.

Days and weeks now passed away to Mrs. Lennox like sweet passages in a dream. Her step became more buoyant, her eye brightened, and her face was fast recovering the pleasing tone of expression it had worn for years. As for Alfred, he was far happier, though there yet remained two active sources of pain, that seemed like evil genii ever dragging his spirits down, and tempting him to ruin. But he struggled manfully to retain the victory he had won.

One day, about three months after the period when this reformation began, an important suit was placed in his hands with the promise of a very handsome fee if it should prove successful. A careful examination of its bearing and merits convinced him that if rightly managed, the suit could be gained. Greatly encouraged, and strengthened in his determination to abide by his resolutions of reform, he turned his steps homewards, an hour or two before nightfall. He was musing upon the case as he passed along Calvert street in the neighborhood of the monument, when he lifted his eyes to the face of a young lady who was passing at the time. Both started, paused an instant, turned pale, and then hurried by. All passed in a moment, but to each it was a moment of agony, for a painful wound, that time could not heal, was probed in each heart to the quick. Florence R—— was loved still; fondly, but hopelessly loved.

Scarcely conscious of anything around him, Lennox moved on mechanically until he reached his home. There was a change in his appearance that instantly attracted his mother's eye, and made her heart bound with a sudden pulsation, and then sink and tremble in her bosom. His manner, too, was altered—and he was strangely silent. But it was evident that he had not been drinking. She did not venture to question him in regard to this change, and he made no allusion to it. When tea was over, he retired at once to his chamber, and remained there during the evening.

While seated there alone, struggling, but in vain, to banish from his mind the image of Florence, he was tempted strongly to seek oblivion in intoxication. Had there been wine or brandy within

his reach, the temptation would have been too strong for him. On the next morning, the breakfast hour passed in the same oppressive silence and reserve that had marked the evening meal, soon as it was over, Alfred went out. In going to his office he had to pass the door of a drinking-house hitherto much frequented. As he neared it, the thought of benumbing the acuteness of his mental suffering by a deep potation, glanced through his mind.

"I might as well do it at first as last," he said to himself, "for to that it must come in the end."

As he said this, he paused opposite the tavern door, and held a brief agitating debate. It ended in his gliding into the house, and calling at the bar for brandy. The glass, half filled with the strong intoxicating draught, was at his lips, when the image of his aged mother came up before his mind with startling distinctness, and he seemed to hear her voice uttering in tones of agony,

"Forbear!"

Slowly he returned the glass, its contents untouched, to the counter, and turning away, passed out from the scene of temptation. Then he hurried on to his office, and sat down to investigate the case he had in hand. But the letters of the document he attempted to examine would fade from his vision, and before the eyes of his mind would form distinctly, the pale, agitated countenance, and eyes eloquent with unextinguished affection that he had met on the day before, for the first time in long years of agony and degradation.

"And mine is not the only blasted heart! Mine are not the only seared affections!" he at length murmured, rising from his chair, and pacing the narrow precincts of his office to and fro. "She, too, has continued to love hopeless—and hopelessly must she love on to the end—as hopelessly as he who has so madly crushed her heart and his own!"

"I can bear this no longer!" he at length ejaculated, pausing, after having continued to pace the floor of his office for half an hour. Then, seeming to take a sudden resolution, he passed out of his office with a hurried step, and in a few minutes was standing at Malcom's bar, draining to the last drop a strong glass of brandy and water.

With painful forebodings did Mrs. Lennox await the return of her son at dinner time. One glance at his face was enough to tell the sad tale that he had again been drinking. Few words

passed between them during the meal. Lennox did not wish to converse, and his mother's heart was too full to speak. At night he was still more under the influence of liquor, and went immediately out after tea. It was twelve o'clock when he returned, and then he went stumbling up to bed, startling the whole house with his noise.

The subsidence of this determined struggle against the debasing vice to which he had become enslaved, left him weaker in resolution than ever. He could now oppose only a temporary desire to be freed from his evil habit, without a single hope of ever being able to rise above it. Of course, under such a state of feelings, he went downwards more rapidly.

A few months brought the affairs of his executorship into such a condition that he feared they could no longer be concealed from his mother. The last dollar had been drawn from bank, and no more rents would be due for two months.

"Alfred, I wish you would bring me home fifty dollars," she said to him one morning, as he was about leaving the house, after breakfast.

He promised to do so, and then immediately went out. He had ten dollars in his pocket, all the money he possessed in the world. His mother supposed that there were, as there should have been, several thousands in bank. Although he was dissipated, she could not suspect him of squandering her money, for her confidence in his integrity of character was unwavering. The vice of drunkenness was a weakness—a blind infatuation. But to waste the substance of his widowed mother was an act in her estimation so far beyond his power to commit, that the bare suspicion of such a thing never crossed her mind. Of this he felt conscious, and it caused him to feel pangs of remorse still more acute.

To his office he first repaired, where he paced the floor for some time, his mind in a state of violent agitation.

"She must not—she *shall* not know it!" he at length said, pausing and striking down his clenched hand into the vacant air, with the energy of desperation. "That pang I will at least spare her."

He seemed in that last expression to have confirmed himself in the determination to perform some act at which his mind revolted, for his whole manner changed, and he became calm and apparently

resolved. After hastily arranging some papers, he left the office and proceeded to a drinking-house, and called for brandy, his favorite drink. A single glass was taken, then another, and another, at intervals of five or ten minutes. As these began to take effect, his whole appearance underwent a change. The despondency of mind and lassitude of body under which he had been laboring gave way to a degree of buoyant confidence, that flowed out into the expression of his face and bearing of his body.

"I can do it, and I *will* do it," he said, half aloud, as he stepped into the street again.

He now took his way down Calvert street until he came to Lovely Lane, through that to South street, then down, and along Second street to ——, into which he turned, first glancing quickly up and down to see if observed by any person to whom he was known. Along this Avenue he proceeded some one or two hundred yards, and then turned into a narrow alley leading into a large building, the rear of which presented few or no indications of its being inhabited. He entered this and ran hurriedly up the stairs, as if still fearful of observation. He had evidently been there before, for the way was familiar to him. The termination of a long, unfurnished, dirty passage, brought him to a door, which he opened, and then entered a richly furnished apartment, spread with tables, at several of which sat groups of individuals absorbed in play. After wandering through this room, glancing first at one party, and then at another, he seemed to make a selection of that to which he preferred attaching himself, and at once drew up to the table where the individuals composing it were seated.

The stakes on this table were small, and therefore he had chosen it. As soon as the game then playing was out, the cards were shuffled, and he was invited to take a hand. The stake was one dollar. He laid his dollar upon the table, played, and won—played again, and won, and so continued until he had won fifty dollars. Elated at this success, he readily agreed to stake the whole sum.—This time he lost.

The presiding genius of the table was a short, dark man, with large whiskers, and a pair of keen restless eyes. At every opportunity that offered for scrutinizing, unobserved, the face of Lennox, he had not failed most carefully to read the expression

of his countenance. He knew him well, and also his downward course for the last few years. He also knew that he was executor for his father's estate, and all about the resources of that estate. When the young man lost his fifty dollars, he was perfectly satisfied that it was all that he had.

"Shall I make you an advance?" he said with a bland smile, holding several bank notes of various amounts, half presented, in his hand.

"I will take a hundred dollars, if you please," Lennox replied. "I have no more with me to-day."

As he said this, he drew a small slip of paper towards him, and taking up a pen, wrote an obligation on demand for the sum named, and handed it over to the gambler.

From that time the run of luck was fluctuating for the course of an hour, when the last dollar of the advanced sum passed from Lennox, and he was again without a stake.

"You don't play as well as you did at first," the gambler remarked. "You must not permit yourself to get excited. This kind of business requires a cool head, you know. Shall I be permitted to favor you again," holding out temptingly a number of bank notes.

"If you please," Lennox said.

"You had better take a couple of hundred, had you not?"

"Yes—a couple of hundred."

And another written obligation was passed. The game now became intensely interesting to Lennox, and, as he grew more and more excited, the gambler and his friends grew calmer and cooler. Less than an hour sufficed to strip the young man of every cent of the two hundred dollars with which he had fondly hoped to retrieve himself.

"Let me have some more," he said in a low, husky but determined whisper, as his last stake vanished. "I play wretchedly —but I must and will do better."

"It is because that you are excited, that the run of luck is against you," his whiskered friend said, smiling gently, as he promptly acceded to the new demand for money. "Only keep cool, and you are the best player in the city; I have never met your equal."

Thus flattered and incited to new efforts, Lennox again took up the cards, and entered into the game with an intenser interest.

This time chance seemed to favor him. He won game after game, to the apparent mortification and alarm of his antagonist players, until he had a pile of money by his side amounting to nearly a thousand dollars. An inward voice whispered him to stop, and retreat from the deluding sphere of the company he was in—and he had half resolved to do so, an operation of mind that was intuitively perceived by at least one present, when he was tempted to risk the whole in a single grand effort. The very question of losing or winning, with its consequences, when all was at stake, was of itself enough to unbalance his mind and prevent his success, had he not, as was the case, an antagonist of double his skill and experience, and one who would not hesitate to ensure success by foul means if fair ones should not prove sufficient for his purpose.

Every card now played was selected by Lennox after the most deliberate reflection and study of the progress and position of the game. For a time success seemed certain—every card exhibited the advantage as gaining on his side. This, of course, unsettled his nerves, causing his heart to leap in disturbed and bounding pulsations, which was seen in his trembling hand and agitated fingering of the cards. The game was now rapidly approaching to a close. A few more cards remained to be played, upon which hung the issue. Already had the young man begun to handle, in anticipation, the rich results of this, the last game he intended to play, when a card, which he had fully persuaded himself could not be in the hand of his opponent, was thrown upon the table, changing the entire fate of the game, and carrying it against him inevitably.

The card or two that remained in his hand were instantly dashed upon the table, from which he arose and commenced hurriedly pacing the room backwards and forwards, every muscle in his face painfully contracted, and its whole expression almost the picture of despair. As he passed near the tables of others engaged in play, an eye would occasionally be turned towards him, half carelessly, or a lip would curl with a selfish smile of malignant triumph or scorn. As for the individual who had tempted him on deeper and deeper, until he had involved him in a debt of more than five hundred dollars, and cruelly deluded him with the hope of gain, until he was about placing the cup to his lips, when he dashed it suddenly to the earth, he coolly appropriated

the stakes, smiling inwardly as he did so, and occasionally glancing towards his victim. He knew the exact state of mind of one under such circumstances, as well as does a physician the condition of his patient by the state of his pulse. The first effervescence of excitement he allowed to pass off, and then approaching him, said, in a soothing tone:

"Do not act so, my dear sir! Remember where you are, and show yourself to be a man. To one so uniformly successful as you, a single reverse should not so utterly dishearten. 'Try again,' is the motto of the ultimately successful in all enterprises —and it is emphatically true to all who engage in this hazardous profession. Since yesterday I have lost twenty thousand dollars — but I never get excited. 'Keep cool,' is my rule of life. Four young men have won from me, during the week, handsome little capitals on which to commence business. I cannot but be pleased at their success, even though I am the loser. But I will make it up again out of some rich young spendthrifts, who are anxious to squander the wealth into the possession of which they have fallen so easily. You have only lost about five hundred dollars since you came in, and surely that will not utterly discourage you. Why, a young man sat down to that table last night, and lost three thousand dollars, when luck turned in his favor, and he left here with nearly five thousand dollars in his pocket. Suppose he had given up when the chances were against him, at two thousand five hundred dollars, what would have been the result? Why ruin, for he was not worth over a thousand dollars in the world."

Thus the tempter urged, and at last induced Lennox to accept of another advance of five hundred dollars. In thus continuing to made advances, he knew perfectly the nature of his risk. He was aware that his victim possessed the entire control of his mother's property, no part of which came under the denomination of real estate, and which could therefore, be transferred without her knowledge. He likewise perfectly understood his character, and was satisfied that he would meet every obligation as long as he had in his hands the means of doing so, even to the trespassing on the rights of another, when he could rest upon the hope of restoring the money he used by some successful turn of fortune. Thus he coolly calculated the risks he run in compassing from selfish ends, the ruin of Lennox.

For a time the young man was permitted again to win, and thus enticed onward and onward, into deeper and more inextricable difficulties, ending in the clear loss of two thousand dollars, for which sum he found himself indebted, on demand, to the individual against whose skill and trickery he had madly opposed his honest inexperience.

At this stage of his infatuation, finding himself losing all self-command, and therefore conscious that he was playing at a great disadvantage, he resolved to risk no more. He had drank nothing for several hours, and the strong potation of the morning had lost its stimulating influence. Mental excitement was now keeping him up, but with this kind of excitement, more of rational perceptions mingled, than with the artificial excitement of liquor. This enabled him to do at least one sensible act, and that was to reserve fifty dollars, the sum which he had at first proposed to himself to win.

It was nearly two o'clock when he stole out through the obscure back entrance of the establishment into which he had introduced himself so cautiously. Once in the street, he turned neither to the right nor to the left, not even enticed by the drinking-houses that would, at another time, have wooed him irresistibly to self-indulgence. Dinner was on the table when he arrived at home, and he sat down with his mother in silence. Her eye, that ever sought his face with an inquiring look, noted that he was pale, and that there was upon his countenance an expression of great anxiety and pain of mind. Few words passed between the mother and son during their brief meal. At its close, the latter handed her a fifty dollar note, and retired to his chamber, his mind in a tumult of troubled thoughts and disturbing anxieties.

An hour after he went out, and repaired to his office. He had been seated there for only a brief period, when the gambler with whom he had contended with such odds in the morning entered.

The brow of Lennox lowered involuntarily, at the same time that he made an effort to put on an unconcerned smile.

"How do you do now, Mr. Lennox?" the visitor said, as he seated himself with a business air.

"I have seen the time when I felt better," was the equivocal reply.

"You despond too easily, Mr. Lennox. Before I became at

last successful in the profession, I lost a pretty little fortune. You lose a little now, but you gain a skill that will amply repay you, in the end, every sacrifice you now make."

"Don't mistake me, if you please," the young lawyer answered, half indignantly. "I have no desire to identify myself with gentlemen of your profession."

"O, as to that, every man must follow his own taste," the gambler replied, tossing his head contemptuously. "But it struck me that you were not altogether loth to win this morning."

"That was the result of a painful necessity, sir," Lennox said, somewhat sternly; "not of a fixed principle. I hold it a moral wrong to gamble! It is the taking the money of another, without rendering him a just equivalent."

"And yet you seemed wonderfully elated to-day when you had a thousand dollars by your side, of winnings, not earnings," the gambler said, with a malicious grin.

"No doubt I did—and I had reason for it. But I will not attempt to justify even in myself an act that I condemn as wrong in another. I was wrong in going to your infernal den, and wrong to feel delight in winning your money. But let us waive all that. Your business now is, I presume, to claim the cancelling of the debt I madly suffered myself to incur."

"You anticipate me in declaring the reason of my visit," the gambler replied. "I come for the money you have acknowledged, under your hand, to be justly due me."

"You will have to wait a few weeks, until I can realise on the sale of a house," Lennox said. "I have no ready money."

"Your notes are on demand."

"I know that, sir, as well as you do; and you can demand their payment a dozen times a day, for the next three weeks, if you choose—but, my word for it, the money will not be forthcoming before the end of that time, if, indeed, the whole of it then," Lennox replied, indignantly.

The gambler ground his teeth together, and muttered a half audible threat—but the eye of Lennox fell not, nor quailed a moment beneath his fixed and angry glance.

"You are a——"

"Beware!" ejaculated the lawyer suddenly, interrupting the sentence. "A man in my position cannot bear much. You may provoke me beyond endurance."

There was that in the look, tone, and manner of the unhappy young man, that made the gambler, fearless and desperate as he was, hesitate.

"You will, at least, secure me in mortgage on your property, until such time as sales of it can be effected?" he said, after a pause of some considerable time.

"I will do no such thing!" was the prompt answer. "My honor is your security, and that is all you need expect; for, most assuredly, it is all that you will receive."

"We will see!" the gambler said, rising suddenly and leaving the office.

After he had left, Lennox went to the office of a real estate broker, and made arrangements with him for the sale of a house, estimated to be worth four thousand dollars—the most valuable piece of property owned by his mother. The terms, as proposed by himself, were one-half in cash, one-fourth in six, and one-fourth in twelve months. In the course of the next two weeks a purchaser was found, for the property was desirable, being under but a nominal ground rent. The money was paid down, notes given, and deed transferred. It was but half an hour after the closing of this transaction, that the gambler entered his office.

"You are a prompt man," Lennox said ironically.

"Such is my reputation," was the cool reply.

Without another word, Lennox proceeded to fill a check for the two thousand dollars, which he had just deposited. This he handed to his unwelcome visitor, after receiving the obligations which he had given, when the latter bowed low and withdrew.

"A lesson for a lifetime, I should think," the young man murmured to himself, sinking back in his chair, overcome with a rising and overpowering sense of despondency. "Fool! fool that I have been! This day I might have stood among the first and most successful advocates at the Bar—but for my blind, mad folly! I have sold my birth-right for a mess of pottage! Wretch, fool, madman that I am! And now I am going on to entail tenfold misery on the head of that honored mother, whose life I have already made a burden too painful to be borne! Wretched man that I am!—What shall save me from this wild infatuation? I feel that I have lost the power of self-control, and am madly rushing on to destruction. O, wretched, wretched man that I am!"

Under this heart-aching sense of his debased and helpless condition did he sit for nearly an hour, when he arose hastily from his chair, saying in a husky voice:

"I can bear this no longer."

Leaving his office, he turned his steps towards one of the hotels, and in a few minutes stood at the bar, where he called for liquor. Turning off a glass there, he proceeded to another and another, drinking at each place, until he had taken six strong glasses of brandy. This did not intoxicate him, but elevated his mind above the paralysing effects of a consciousness of his embarrassed condition.

On the next day a bill of taxes, and two or three other bills, were presented amounting to about one hundred and fifty dollars. To pay these, he had not the first dollar. His professional fees were reduced to a mere trifle, and there were to be no further returns from the sale which had just been made for six months. To resort again to play, he felt would be madness. There was nothing left but to sell another house, and to this he resorted most reluctantly. The sale was for fifteen hundred dollars—five hundred in cash, and the balance, as before, in payments of six and twelve months.

He now felt comparatively easy in mind; for present relief where the emergency has been trying, always throws into a degree of obscurity the approaching, but, comparatively, distant trouble. But this feeling gradually subsided, and his mind became oppressed with the idea that utter ruin was approaching, and would involve him inevitably. The effect of all this upon his mind was to make him silent and gloomy at home.

As to the state of his mother's mind—that mother who had loved him with such a deep and confiding love—under all the evils of her relation towards her son of which she was conscious, we feel our pen inadequate to a description. Her manner and appearance were all sadly changed. She seemed to have lived twenty years during less than half that period. The cheerful countenance, ever responding to the inward play of varied and pleasing emotions, had become fixed into an unchanging expression of subdued, touching melancholy, mingled, as even a careless eye might see, with something of hopelessness. To Alfred she always spoke in the kindest and gentlest tones, and regarded him and loved him with a deeper interest than ever—that pecu-

liar kind of interest which a parent always feels for a child hopelessly deformed, and rendered in a measure disgusting to others. She did not give way to a paralysing despondency under her severe trials, but was kept in a degree of calm yet exquisitely painful resignation to her hard lot. The wind, tempered in a degree to the shorn lamb, was still a cold and biting wind.

Things remained nearly in the same condition in which we have presented them for about a year and a half, when Lennox, who had been several times during the period tempted to risk something at the gaming table, found himself again in a narrow place, in consequence of having lost several large sums of money. The only property that remained of all that had been entrusted to his care, was a small house worth twelve or fourteen hundred dollars, and the dwelling in which they lived, which was a very handsome one. Of all this Mrs. Lennox was profoundly ignorant. Nor did any suspicion of the real state of affairs cross her mind. She knew that the habits of her son must involve a constant outlay of money, but she supposed that he was of course doing something in the way of his profession by which all his wants were more than supplied. Every time she asked for money, the amount desired, whether large or small, was promptly handed to her, and thus no suspicion was allowed to enter her mind.

No resource presenting itself, Lennox was induced to sell again. He did so, and received a few hundred dollars as the cash payment on the sale. Conscious that this amount could not possibly meet all the demands that would be made upon him, his mind entered seriously upon a debate of the question, how that small sum could be used to reproduce itself. Of course, to a man in his condition, and to one who had already been tempted to play, no means could present themselves better than the gambling table. The income from his profession was a mere trifle, for few were disposed to employ him in any case that involved even small consequences. To the gaming table, then, he resorted, risking only small sums, and breaking away when the chances were against him. But, although he often won, yet he rarely left one of those miserable haunts without a diminution of the sum of money with which he had entered. At last every dollar had vanished.

"If I only had fifty dollars I could recover all—I know that I

could!" he said, one morning, as the influence of his early potations began to be felt. Under this new impulse of hope he went and borrowed, on a mortgage of the house in which they lived, the sum of four hundred dollars. Twelve o'clock that night found him wandering the street half delirious, without a dollar in his pocket.

Thus he continued to waste, in vain efforts to gain back what he had so wickedly squandered of his widowed mother's substance, until all was gone. The house in which they lived was only nominally the property of Mrs. Lennox—there were upon it mortgages fully covering every cent of its value. And for a payment of the loans upon these, her son was daily harassed. Of all this she was in profound ignorance.

"I want thirty or forty dollars, Alfred," she said to him, as he was about rising from the breakfast table, at a time when his mind was in a state of tumult under the first vivid and harrowing consciousness of his true position.

He started involuntarily at the request, and a confused expression passed suddenly over his countenance. This, if perceived, was not understood by his mother—at least suspicion was not aroused in her mind. At the regular dinner hour he did not come home, a circumstance of such rare occurrence that it troubled Mrs. Lennox. Towards evening, however, he returned, but so much intoxicated as to be obliged to go to bed. On the next morning when he awoke, it was with a vivid consciousness of the true nature of his relation towards his mother. Her already sadly changed appearance troubled him, and had continued to trouble him all along, for its cause he knew but too well. How much more distressing would be the change when she should come to know all! He dared not think of it.

To meet her at the breakfast table, without the money she had asked for on the day before, he did not dare to do; for he felt that, if he should do so, he must inevitably betray the secret of his mad waste of her entire substance. He therefore arose, and quietly left the house. To his office he first went, but the tumult of his mind was too great to allow him to remain there but for a short period. From thence he repaired to a tavern and drank freely. Meeting a few friends there, about as abandoned to the vice of tippling as himself, he spent a great portion of the morning in drinking and discussing politics. When he at last

emerged from the place, it was near twelve o'clock. At first he turned his steps towards his office—but the image of duns and collectors arose in his mind, and caused him to change the direction he had taken. For a time he wandered about the street, undetermined what to do or where to go. At last he resolved to go home.

On entering the house he found his mother standing in the middle of the parlor floor, pale and trembling, with an expression of the most harrowing anguish of spirit on her countenance.

"O, mother! what is the matter?" her son involuntarily exclaimed, while the blood grew cold about his heart, for he had an instinctive perception that the worst had come.

"Tell me, Alfred," she said, in a husky whisper, "if it be indeed true that you have mortgaged this house for an amount fully equal to its value?"

"It is too true," responded the unhappy man, bursting into tears.

"And the rest of my property?" pursued the mother.

"All gone!" was the brief reply.

"O, when shall I awake from this horrible dream!" the heart-stricken mother murmured, sinking upon a sofa, faint and helpless as an infant.

A promise, a pledge of amendment and of devotion to his mother arose to the lips of her son—and he was sincere in his wish to do all that he was about to promise, but he felt that such a promise would be in vain; for he had come to despair of ever being able to conquer the desire for liquor which was now irresistible. He therefore stood a silent spectator of her misery, without being able to offer a single word or act of alleviation. A few minutes passed, and then Mrs. Lennox arose slowly and retired to her chamber, where she sunk upon her knees and prayed to the Strong for strength, to whom alone she could look for support under this new, unexpected, and most painful trial, involving, as it did, not only the entire loss of all her means of support, but destroying that sustaining confidence in her son's integrity that had kept her head as it were above the billows. In the consciousness too that she had at least an income of some six or seven hundred dollars, besides her house to live in, she had felt that she could ever have a home for her infatuated child. That hope was now not only cut off, but she knew not when the crisis

came, as come she felt that it must, where she would find even for herself a shelter or home.

During that morning, in the absence of Lennox, a legal process had been served upon him at the house, preparatory to a foreclosure of the mortgages. This process came into his mother's possession, and at once revealed to her the secret he had been so anxious to conceal from her. A few weeks sufficed to effect a sad change in Mrs. Lennox's external circumstances. Her home of thirty years was taken from her, and she was forced to remove to a very small and uncomfortable tenement, after the sale of a great portion of her furniture, the proceeds of which formed her only means of support for herself and her son, to whom her affections, shocked and lacerated as they had been, still clung with a deep and abiding tenderness.

As for him, the shock roused him to a temporary exertion. For a few months he abstained from drink, and attended regularly at his office and the court room. Several cases had already come into his hands, and his mother had begun to feel new hope for him enkindling in her bosom—was beginning to be reconciled to the change in her circumstances, if the effect upon Alfred was to be so salutary, when he fell again, and abandoned himself to a lower degree of moral debasement.

A few more years sufficed to sink Mrs. Lennox into a condition of abject poverty, and to make her son as abandoned and wretched in appearance as he was in character. It was with the utmost difficulty that, stricken in years and broken in health, the mother could procure, by knitting and very coarse sewing, for her eyesight had failed her very much as years accumulated, even the necessary food, coarse in quality, that was required to sustain nature. In him the desire for drink had increased until the obtaining of it made up the one end of his life. For a time, when other means failed, he would borrow small sums from old acquaintances; when this could no longer be done, and he could get liquor in any of the lowest and vilest places on trust, he resorted to that means. But his failure to pay soon cut off this resource. Then he would abstract, when opportunity offered, pennies and even small silver from his mother, hard as she had to toil for the meagre pittance she could obtain, until she was forced to keep this temptation out of his way. Often he would go for nearly a whole day without a drink, and when night came,

half maddened by his intolerable desire, would solicit money in the street, and when this failed, beg for bread and sell it for liquor! This was his deplorable condition at the time when he was induced to attend the meeting of reformed drinkers, where he signed the pledge!

"Do not go out to-night, Alfred," his mother said, as he arose from the table on that stormy evening, and lifted his hat, preparatory to leaving the house. The look that she gave him was sorrowful indeed, but still blended much of a parent's earnest love. He did not reply—only paused a moment or two, under the desire not to pain her by acting contrary to her reasonable request—but the thirst for drink was irresistible, and his hesitation ended in his saying,

"I will be back soon," when he glided hurriedly away.

The appearance of everything in the house indicated a low degree of poverty. The handsomely-furnished, and commodious dwelling had been changed for a small frame tenement, containing one room below, and two narrow chambers above. The furniture of that below, in which the mother sat, consisted of a few common chairs and a table, with sundry small articles of household economy, the whole not worth ten dollars. The appearance of the place was cheerless and desolate in the extreme, and rendered still more so by the feeble light of a single small candle. Without, the rain beat heavily against the windows, and the wind came in fitful gusts. It was just fifteen years since the removal of her husband had made her a widow;—the change in all things around her, but more particularly in herself, indicated the passage of twice that number of annual cycles, each burdened with reverses and afflictions.

"Poor boy!" she murmured, as Alfred closed the door after him, heaving a deep sigh as she spoke.

Then lifting from the shelf a large family Bible, she placed it upon the table, and endeavored to read as well as the dim light and her wretched vision would permit. Her progress was slow, but as she lingered over each verse, a deeper meaning than that apparent in the mere letter of the Word, seemed to come by an influx into her mind, bearing with it a degree of confidence in her Heavenly Father, and thence a measure of peace, such as she had not experienced for many, many years. As she thus read on, she would pause ever and anon to look upwards with moistened eyes —now with the murmured expression of resignation.

"Thy will, O Lord, be done!"

Or the prayer,

"Help me to *suffer* as well as to *do* thy will, O my Father."

Or—

"Still, Lord, suffer me to pray for my erring one. Let it please thee to bring him back. O, let my last days be cheered by his restoration."

Then she would again bend over the holy Book, and ponder its sacred truths, whose influence continued to fall like gentle dews upon the parched ground. She felt comforted in her affliction above what she had been for many months, and she was conscious that the comfort she experienced was from on high.

But as the time passed away, and the storm without abated not, she began to be troubled at the prolonged absence of her son. He had said that he would be back soon, but more than an hour had passed since he left the house, and yet he had not returned.

What she most feared was that he might fall intoxicated in the street, and freeze to death. Her anxiety about him had approached almost to alarm, when about ten o'clock the door opened quietly and he entered. As she looked up, she was conscious that there was about him some change, though its nature was not apparent to her mind. He was evidently no more under the influence of liquor than when he went out—that, in a moment or two, her mind apprehended.

"I am glad that you are home, Alfred," she said; "I have been troubled about you. It is a cold and stormy night for one no better protected than you are to be out."

"I am better protected, mother, than you think for," he replied mysteriously, as he drew a chair up to the fire, and seated himself near her.

"I see," she said, observing him more narrowly, "that you have on better and warmer garments than when you went out. Where did these come from, Alfred?"

"From kind friends, mother—the kindest and best friends I have met for many a long year."

There was an earnest pathos in his voice as he uttered this brief sentence, that touched the heart of his mother, and made her pulses throb with an interest as new as it was undefined.

"Who are those friends?—Where are they? Speak out plainly, Alfred," Mrs. Lennox now said, for her interest had become strangely and suddenly excited.

"I don't know, mother, that you will feel much confidence in what I say—I have deceived both yourself and my own self so sadly and so often," the son replied. "But the truth is this, I have joined the society of reformed drinkers to-night, and I feel more confidence in being able to abide by my pledge than ever I did in any resolution which I have heretofore taken to reform. Others have confidence in me likewise, as these dry and comfortable clothes will testify. Can *you* take hope, mother?"

It was only a few days before that Mrs. Lennox had been made acquainted with the wonderful doings of the Washington and Howard Temperance Societies—how they were drawing within their sustaining sphere drunkards of the lowest grade, and thoroughly reforming them. The intelligence had seemed to her like a strange passage in some bewildering dream. But when she heard her son relating, in a calm and earnest manner, that he had united himself with these men, and saw that he had really not been drinking, she felt a new and lively hope springing up, tempered it is true by fear and trembling.

"A mother's heart never ceases to hope for her child," she said, in reply to his question, the moisture dimming her aged eyes.

"Hope then for me with a stronger hope, and let me find a power in your confidence," was his reply. "I am deeply in earnest now; and with my earnest effort to reform, is united what I have never had before, the sustaining power of a large society. Oh, mother! if you could know how wretched I have been for the last six months—wretched in body and mind, you would feel sure, that, once escaped from the horrible pit and the miry clay, nothing could tempt me back again."

"Oh, my son, if you can only find power to abide by this resolution," Mrs. Lennox said, her voice trembling, and a sudden agitation running through every nerve, "how happy I shall be! The past shall all sink into oblivion, or be remembered only to add pleasure to the present."

"I will abide, mother. I feel that I must abide."

"Then let us give thanks to Him who has thus caused light to spring up amid darkness—to Him who will be strength to us in every good resolution."

As she said this, the mother sank upon her knees, and her son by her side, and with humble acknowledgments for the great

good with which their Heavenly Father had now blessed them, prayed that when the storms of temptation again prevailed, the weak one might be delivered from evil.

Then they arose, and each retired with more peaceful hearts than they had known for many long years. Day after day now passed by, and Lennox went out and came in a perfectly sober man. In spite of her efforts to feel assured, his mother could not, however, but live in fear and trembling; though this gradually subsided, especially as he sought immediate employment, and unexpectedly obtained, through some friends of the temperance movement, who knew his legal abilities, the management of several good cases, with the payment of a portion of the fees at once. These enabled him to obtain such clothing as was necessary for one in the position which he had professionally to occupy, besides leaving him a little ready cash, every cent of which he gave to his mother, thus relieving her from the oppressive burden of having to labor for the means of subsistence. Before this supply was gone, more came providentially into his hands, which was as promptly placed in hers.

The sudden appearance of Lennox at the Bar, under the known circumstances of his reformation, created a lively interest in his favor, and everything was done to sustain him. Six months had only passed when he was able to rent a larger and better house for his mother—to furnish it with some degree of comfort, and to provide her with a servant. Then, indeed, did she truly feel confidence in her son, born to her anew. Like the son of the widow spoken of in the Gospels, she received him, as it were, from the dead.

It was, perhaps about this time, that there sat one day, in a well furnished apartment in the same city, a maiden, over whose head some thirty-five years at least had passed. Though still fair, there was upon her face a deep cast of thoughtful melancholy. She was sitting by a table, leaning her head upon her hand, with a newspaper by her side, from which she had evidently been reading. After some time thus spent in deep abstraction, she lifted the paper, and read over, as if for the second or third time, a paragraph running thus:

"A Pleasing Scene.—Yesterday we stepped into the court room to observe the progress of an important trial. We found

Mr. A. Lennox on the floor, and listened for more than an hour to one of the most able arguments we have heard for a long time. Mr. L. seems to have lost little of the vigor, depth and brilliancy of mind that distinguished his best efforts at the Bar, more than ten years ago. Our readers are aware that a great change has taken place in him, and that he is now in every respect a reformed man. He will yet take a high position at our Bar."

A long, deep respiration followed the reading of this paragraph, and again the maiden fell into a profound reverie.

The reader has no doubt guessed her to be none other than Florence R——. Her father had died some four or five years previous, and left her a handsome property. From the time of her rejection, under the counsel of her father, of the suit of Mr. Lennox, she had in a good degree secluded herself from society, much to the pain of her father. In spite of this seclusion, she was twice wooed, but unsuccessfully. Her affections had become too deeply pledged, and were not to be transferred to another. Conscious of this, from her conduct, her father feared that, in the event of his death, Lennox might make a show of reformation, and again press his suit. To guard as much as possible against one of the consequences of this, he willed her only a certain portion of his property, giving the balance to her children if she should marry and have issue. In case she died without issue, the whole reverted to the family of a relative.

A few days after Florence had become fully conscious of tho position that Lennox was taking since his reformation, a fact that had some time before reached her ears, he was passing down Market street, when he suddenly met her face to face. He did not feel authorized to speak to her, under all the circumstances; but he read the expression of her eyes, and felt that there lingered yet in her heart an unextinguished, and unextinguishable affection for him.

"How pale, and thin, and sad she looks!" he said to himself, as he reached his office, and sat down to reflect deeply upon the incident. "How inextricably involved is the happiness of others in our actions! When one branch falls, how many a twig is borne along with it! Poor Florence! What a life of hopeless sorrow has been thine—and I, wretch that I have been! have madly entailed it all upon thee. But she loves me still—I feel

that she does; and near my heart no image has ever rested but hers. Can I—ought I to hope yet for her hand?

Such reflections could not but be succeeded by action. A week had not passed before he had sent her a note requesting an interview. It was granted. Old feelings were of course revived at once, and with a new power. She had none to counsel her but her own heart, and that plead strongly for her old lover and friend. For a few months he continued to visit her, and then formally renewed his offer for her hand, which was accepted. They were not, however, married for a year after, at which time he had taken, as predicted, the high position his talents commanded. He had lost much, of course, during ten years of almost total neglect of legal matters. But a year and a half of close application for one of his natural vigor of mind, stored his mind with authorities and principles of almost universal application.

It is now six months since he was united in holy wedlock to Florence R——, and nearly a year since his aged mother was removed to a better and happier world. We might linger here in presenting pleasant pictures in the life of Mr. and Mrs. Lennox—pictures that would affect the heart with delightful emotions, but we are admonished to close our story, already prolonged beyond the prescribed limits, leaving it with the reader to sketch, in fancy, scenes of pleasantness and peace, making glad the hearts of two, long held asunder by an inseparable barrier, but now restored to each other in confidence and hope.

THE MODERATE DRINKER.

"Come, Harvey, let us have a drink," said Henry Martin to his friend, Harvey Gray, as the two stood conversing at the corner of the street, one beautiful evening in June.

"Thank you, Henry—I do not care about drinking."

"Nonsense! Come along! I shall take it as an offence if you do not drink with me."

"I hope not, Henry; for, as I refuse to drink from principle, I should regret extremely to have you take an offence because I do not feel at liberty to violate a principle."

"Principle! What has principle to do with drinking, pray?"

"In my case it has a good deal to do with it. It is a dangerous habit, and therefore I will not indulge it."

"Dangerous! How strangely you talk!"

"Did you never see a drunkard, Henry?"

"Certainly—what then?"

"Have you never felt afraid of becoming such a debased, unhappy creature?"

"Do you wish to insult me, Harvey Gray?" the friend said half indignantly.

"You know that I do not," was the calm reply.

"Then how could you ask me such a question?"

"Because it seemed to me pertinent to the matter under consideration. The most debased drunkard was once a sober man, and dreamed as little of danger as you seem to now."

"But he drank immoderately—I am a moderate drinker. I know exactly how much to take."

"So did he once, and no doubt reasoned as you do."

"I shall really get seriously offended, if you continue to allude to me in that way, Harvey," the young man said. "It no more follows that because a man drinks he is in danger of drunkenness, than it does that because a man crosses a bridge

every day, he is in danger of sinking with that bridge into the stream below. Men have fallen with bridges and men have become drunkards—but where one falls, thousands remain uninjured in either case."

"You bring into your argument the power of analogy and comparison, but I cannot see that it bears truly on the question, especially as your conclusion is fatally incorrect—the thousand to one do not certainly remain uninjured in the case of drinking. So fully have I become satisfied of this, that I have resolved to abstain from the unnecessary use of intoxicating liquors as a matter of principle."

"You did not feel yourself particularly in danger, I hope?"

"I certainly did, Henry; and yet I drank as moderately as you do—perhaps more so. But in a comparison of the quantity I drank, and the desire that I felt, with what both were a year ago, I found that both were increased in a ratio of at least fifty per cent. I found that I remembered more distinctly the usual hour of drinking, and began to look forward with interest to the approach of that hour. These things convinced me that I was in danger, and I at once resolved to stop short."

"You were frightened at a shadow, Harvey. Thank Heaven! I am conscious of a power over myself that must ever keep me from any immoderate indulgence in this respect."

"Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall, Henry."

"*You* can take heed—I am conscious of no danger. But the fact is, Harvey, this kind of talk vexes me. It involves a reflection upon my character, for it supposes that I am in danger of becoming that low, miserable, debased wretch, a common drunkard."

"There is only one means of reaching any point, and that is, to enter into the right way. Now the only way to drunkenness, is through habitual moderate drinking. Any one who is a moderate drinker, then, is on the only known road to drunkenness. He may never reach that deplorable condition—he may never indulge beyond a certain rigid bound of moderation, but for every one who thus restrains himself, ten will rush on to ruin. For myself, I confess that I am afraid to take such a fearful risk. More especially, as I stand not in the smallest need of intoxicating drinks."

"I am sure that they are useful and good in their place."

"Everything is useful and good in its place—but alcoholic drinks, I contend are out of their place, when used to stimulate unnaturally a healthy body. Good nourishing food, plenty of exercise and a cheerful temper, are sufficient to keep up in the stomach and nervous system a truly healthful action. If, by artificial stimulants, you increase this action temporarily, on the subsidence of the stimulating effects the tone of the system must fall below the healthy point, for a process of exhaustion has gone on. Necessarily, now, it must take some time for nature to come back to that equilibrium of activity which has been destroyed. If such a disturbing influence is brought to bear regularly upon the human organism and its activity, the system will fail at last to come back to a natural state, and then will come the regular demand for stimulant, and the unhappy individual will believe himself unable to live without it. The process I have described briefly, may be twenty years in reaching a climax, but if not checked at some point, the result will sooner or later be that which I have described."

"But I know exceptions to your rule, Harvey. There is old Mr. T——; he takes his brandy regularly three times a day, and has done so, he tells me, for the last forty years. Yet he is not a drunkard—nay, is not excited by liquor, and says he never was in his life."

"Can you say the same, Henry?"

"No, I cannot."

"Then see the difference. Old Mr. T—— has been drinking brandy for at least forty years, and has never been excited by liquor in his life. You have been habitually using it every day for about five years, and have been excited hundreds of times. Consequently you are nearer to drunkenness — excuse me — at twenty-three, than Mr. T—— is at sixty. He presents one of those rare instances where a man may habitually indulge in the use of strong drinks for a long series of years, and not be overcome by them — your case is one of the thousands, where the fondness for liquor increases day after day, until it gains the mastery. Take my word for it, Henry, you are in imminent danger!"

"Really, Harvey," his friend replied in a serious tone, "if any one but you were to talk to me in that way, I would never forgive him."

"To any one else I might not feel at liberty thus to speak. With you I take the privilege of a friend."

"And I, as a friend, must say that I think you exhibit a great deal of weakness."

"I feel, Harvey," Grey said, "too weak to allow myself to be brought into contact with a powerful habit, such as that of drinking."

"Well, I 'm not afraid—I know my own strength."

"You do not really know yourself, or you would not speak so confidently—boastingly I might say—as you do. You know the power of habit in the case of the tobacco-chewer. At first the weed is nauseous to his taste, but after a few attempts to chew it, its effects upon the nervous system become so pleasant, and his desire for it so strong, that he cannot do without it. So it is with stimulating drinks—they induce such a change in the whole tone of the system, that a constant demand for their influence is created, which demand soon forms into a habit which but few can break through. In the first instance, the effect of the habit is not so disastrous as in the last."

"Well, it 's no use to talk, Harvey," his friend said, in a tone of impatience. "You might talk from now till doomsday, but would most certainly fail to convince me that I am in danger of becoming a drunkard. I flatter myself that I am too much of a man to debase myself in that way. So come along and take a drink with me."

"What!—after I have declared that for me to drink is dangerous, do you urge me thus?"

"I do n't believe you are in a particle of danger. But, if you think you are, why do not drink, that 's all."

"I certainly shall not," was his firm reply.

"Well, then I must bid you good evening, for I am as dry as a fish and must have a glass."

Thus the friends parted, one to return home to his family and the other to lounge for an hour in a tavern, and indulge in two or three useless glasses of liquor. This was not the regular practice of Martin. Perhaps not more than once or twice in the week was he to be found away from his young wife, to whom he had been married a few months. But often when he did not go out, he felt a wish to do so, the thought of a glass of mixed liquor, producing a strong desire to drink. But he was as perfectly uncon-

scious of danger as he represented himself to be, in his conversation with his friend, and really felt half offended at his remonstrance. His love for his wife, and his strong desire to acquire a competence in the world, he knew to be active in his mind above everything else, and not to be put in opposition to a mere trifling habit of taking a pleasant glass every day.

Some five years rapidly passed away, during which time Henry Martin continued his habit of moderate drinking. Two glasses a day had increased to three or four, yet the progress had been so slow, that he was himself unconscious of it. In his worldly matters, industry and activity were meeting their reward. His business was increasing, and he had already purchased himself a handsome dwelling. He had likewise become the father of three children, all daughters.

"I am not a drunkard yet, you see, Harvey," he said to his old friend, whom he occasionally met, and whom he had never really forgiven in his heart for what he had said years before.

"And I trust never will be, Henry," was his reply.

"You still think me in danger, I suppose?"

"I certainly do."

"Do you think I am anything more than a moderate drinker yet?"

"I hope not."

"Have you seen anything to convince you to the contrary?"

"No, I believe not."

"And yet you think me in danger?"

"I do."

"You are mistaken."

"Then why do you not give up a mere useless habit, in the indulgence of which there is, at least, remote danger, and danger of the worst kind?"

"Because I don't see any occasion for so doing."

"I think I can give a better reason."

"Well, what is it?"

"Because you have not the resolution to contend against its fascinations."

"It is not that."

"No doubt you think so—but I am persuaded that what I allege is the true reason."

Martin shook his head, and then waived the subject.

Six months after that time, he was thrown off his guard, at a supper party, and drank to intoxication.

"If Harvey had seen me last night," he said, laughingly, to a friend the next day, "he would have thought that it was a gone case with me. Poor fellow! He is as much afraid of a glass of brandy as I would be of a rattlesnake."

The friend laughed, encouragingly, at the same time that he thought within himself that Harvey would have had some ground for his fears.

Five years more passed away, in the steady progress of time, and found Martin, whose business was that of a grocer, worth some twenty thousand dollars, and moving in quite a respectable station, for he was a man of considerable intelligence. His family now consisted of his wife and five daughters, the oldest about ten years of age, and the youngest but a babe.

As for himself, he was only, in his own estimation, a moderate drinker, and not in the least danger, notwithstanding he drank as often again as he did five years before, and each glass of double the strength. He was, of course, at all times more or less under the influence of liquor, and usually felt wretched in the morning until he had steadied his nerves by a strong glass of brandy and water.

His friend Harvey, had moved away from the city, and there was, therefore, no one who would take the liberty of pointing out to him his danger. But it would have subserved no good end, however, for he could not have borne it, and would have felt it to be almost an insult.

At forty-five, with a young family of daughters, the eldest of whom, well educated and accomplished, were just at the age to go into society, Mr. Martin began to feel conscious of the encroachments and power of an evil habit—conscious that he was no longer a mere moderate drinker. But this not until he had, unstimulated by company to drink too freely, become intoxicated in his own family, and from liquor drunken at his own sideboard, and alone. In this condition he was seen by his wife and children—to them a sad, heart-aching sight, for he was one of the tenderest of husbands and fathers.

It was some weeks before the shadow that fell upon his household was dispelled; but ever after there was something of fear about their hearts whenever they saw him put the cup to his lips.

For the first time in his life he now felt that he was in danger, and resolved to be more cautious in future—to remain what he had always been, a moderate drinker. He restricted his number of glasses a day to ten, an amount that he could have borne very well, if it had not happened that he filled them nearer to the brim than before. Flattering himself that he was now drinking moderately, he went on to indulge himself day after day, steadily increasing the quantity of liquor while the number of glasses remained the same. At dinner he began to use it more freely, hiding its effects upon him by a long afternoon nap. This involved a neglect of his business, which was now left more and more to the management of his clerks.

For some time the old temperance movement had been in operation, its advocates laboring with zeal and efficiency in guarding those who were yet beyond the charmed circle of self-indulgence. With many of its ablest friends and supporters, Martin was on terms of intimacy, and often alluded to himself in its discussions with them, as an instance of a man who had been in the habit of drinking regularly for more than twenty-five years without becoming a drunkard, thus indicating his belief that he could still control himself.

"I consider you in imminent danger," said one of these individuals to him, with more than ordinary frankness.

"How so?" he asked in surprise.

"Because, to speak honestly, Mr. Martin," was the reply, "I fear that the habit, which you boast of having so much under your control, is gaining a fatal predominance over your resolutions. My own observation tells me that a single year has wrought a great change in you."

"In what respect, sir?"

"You evidently drink more than you did."

"That is a mistake, let me tell you, sir. I take a less number of glasses than I did twelve months ago."

"Then the quantity is increased—for the effects upon you are much more apparent."

At this Mr. Martin was silent and evidently offended, and so his plain-spoken friend bade him a good morning.

Such a system of moderate drinking, to a man of his age, necessarily unfitted him for business, and the consequence was, that his affairs began gradually to fall into disorder; and this too

at a time when the expenses of education and other things in regard to his children had become greatly augmented. The troubles incident to an embarrassed business had the effect to cause him to resort more frequently to his sideboard, and at length, to elude the observation of his family, who were too evidently conscious of his weakness, and distressed at its effect upon him, to the taverns and liquor stores.

Two or three years previous to this time, Anna, his eldest daughter, had been married to a promising young merchant, and Emily, the next in age, was engaged and about being married to another young man, of equal standing and promise. Three younger daughters, all deeply attached to their father, were advancing towards the period of womanhood, all forming a family of no common interest.

But from the oldest to the youngest there mingled a troubled feeling with their filial affection. The thought of their father ever rested like a burden upon their hearts, for to all, his weakness and infatuation had become clearly apparent. The mother had a double cause for concern—she saw that their substance was gradually wasting away; that her husband's business was becoming more and more embarrassed, and that inevitable ruin stared them in the face.

At last the crisis came. At the age of fifty he failed in business, and had every dollar taken from him. Its effect was to completely paralyse all his energies. He made no attempt again to enter into any kind of business, spent most of his time wandering about the streets, and drinking still more immoderately—frequently to intoxication. It was no uncommon thing to see him staggering about in public places in noon-day.

The whole burden now fell upon Mrs. Martin. Two of her daughters were comfortably married, and would have gladly given her a home, with their sisters, but they could not so far trespass upon the rights and feelings of their husbands as to introduce their father also, with his habits—and without him they could not come. For a time the drooping and disheartened wife and mother resorted to that often-tried expedient of widows and wives with drunken or lazy husbands, the keeping of a boarding house, an expedient that, nine times in ten, utterly fails of success.

Six months after she had opened her house, she sat in the neatly arranged parlor of her eldest daughter. Her face was thin and

pale, and wore an expression of sorrow, in lines that had become fixed. She looked older by ten or fifteen years than she really was, and had an air of feebleness such as appertains to ill health or old age.

"How are things with you now, ma?" her daughter asked, after the first salutations were over.

"Bad enough, Anna," the mother replied, in a sad, desponding tone. "I believe I shall have to break up."

"Indeed! I am sorry for that." Then, after a pause, "And scarcely sorry, either, for the life of toil you now live is killing you."

"I feel that it is, Anna. But what shall I do? I must not sit down in idleness. The children have to be raised and educated, and there is now no one but me to do it."

"Don't your boarders pay you?" Anna asked, after a painful silence of some minutes.

"Yes, with one or two exceptions. But there is little profit to be made by keeping boarders, where a high rent has to be paid, and a number of wasteful servants kept. And besides, it costs me a good deal to keep your father in money. I am sure he does not spend less than five or six dollars a week."

"For what?"

"In drinking, I suppose."

"Isn't it dreadful, ma!" Anna said, the tears coming to her eyes, "just to think what he might have been? So respectable, so intelligent, so kind! Everybody liked him; but now—Oh, it is dreadful!"

"It is indeed, Anna. No man could have been more respected than he—no family happier than ours, had it not been for this wretched habit of drinking, which has gained on him almost imperceptibly for years, until it has acquired an absolute dominion over him."

"You don't know how bad he makes me feel sometimes, ma," Anna said, after another brief and oppressive silence. "He never comes here now except when he has been drinking to excess; and he is almost sure to come when Mr. N—— is at home, and his presence always annoys him very much. It is only for my sake that he does not forbid him the house. Night before last he came in when we had company, and acted so badly that Mr. N—— had to call him out and tell him he must go home. O, ma, you can-

not tell how wretched I felt! I did not blame my husband, for he cannot feel towards him as I do."

"I feel for you deeply, Anna," the mother replied. "But we must endeavor to bear our hard lot with resignation."

"So I often say to myself, ma. But it is hard to be resigned to such an affliction. I could bear his death—but his degradation—O, it makes me feel awful sometimes."

At that moment Mr. N——, the husband of Anna, came in unexpectedly from his store.

"Good morning, ma," he said, in a cheerful tone, "I am glad to see you. I have been thinking of you for the past hour a good deal, and have just come in to talk with Anna about matters and things. And, as you are here, we may be able to talk, perhaps, to more purpose. To begin then, it seems to me that the best thing you can do is to give up your boarding-house. It is a slave's life, and I can see that you are sinking under it."

"We were just talking about that very thing, Charles," Anna said, in an animated tone.

"I am glad of it. Then I hope you have come to the conclusion, ma, that it is the best thing you can do?"

"I am forced to that conclusion, Charles."

"Have you made up your mind what to do after giving up?"

"Indeed I have not. That is the doubt and uncertainty that troubles me."

"Will you be guided by me?"

"I will, Charles; for my own mind is so bewildered, and everything around me seems so dark, that I cannot see any object in a clear light."

"I will tell you then what I have been thinking that you ought to do. Give up your boarding-house, at once, of course, and move into a smaller house. I bought one yesterday, at a public sale, at a very low price. It shall be yours to live in, rent free, so long as you choose to occupy it. Anna and I will take Mary, and Emily and her husband can take Julia, thus leaving you only the care of little Harriet. How do you like that arrangement?"

The brightening up of Mrs. Martin's countenance showed how much her oppressed heart had been relieved by the proposition.

"As a means of relief from burdens too heavy for me to bear, I will accept your proposition with gladness," she said, with

emotion, "though it is a hard task for a mother to be forced to part with her children, and part with them too under such circumstances."

"I know that it is a painful necessity," her son-in-law replied; "but it cannot now, I fear, be helped."

"I fear not."

"But what will you do, ma, after you remove?"

"I will take care of that, Anna," replied her husband, promptly. "That has all been considered. Emily's husband and myself will see that your mother does not stand in need of anything; and that she shall no longer have to toil to support herself and family."

A gush of tears attested the relief which this declaration brought to the mind of Mrs. Martin.

The arrangement proposed was soon entered upon. The boarding-house was given up, the two children removed to their sisters, and Mrs. Martin comfortably established in a small, neat house, with her husband and Harriet, a little girl just eight years old.

It was known to Mr. N——, through his wife, that Mr. Martin had been regularly furnished by her mother with money to buy liquor. This resource he determined should be cut off. To do so effectually, Mrs. Martin, her own consent to the arrangement being freely given, was to be furnished with but little money. Groceries and dry goods were all obtained on standing orders, and the constant attention of Anna and Emily fully anticipated every other want so as to relieve their mother's mind entirely from any unpleasant feeling.

The consequence of course was, that Mr. Martin, at a time when his thirst for liquor demanded some fifteen or twenty glasses a day, found every ordinary resource cut off.

"Give me a dollar, Anna," he said to his wife, on the morning after they had removed, he having submitted passively to the change without seeming to take any interest in it.

"I have not a cent in the world," was the reply.

"But I must have it," was his response.

"I have not a cent," Mrs. Martin repeated.

"Then what are you going to do?" he asked.

"Trust to Providence," she said.

For a moment or two her husband looked at her, half inquir-

ingly, half angrily, for he seemed to doubt her statement. Then he commenced pacing the room backwards and forwards, evidently in a deep study. This continued only for a few minutes when he lifted his hat and went out.

To the house of Emily, his second daughter, he proceeded at once.

"Emily, I want a couple of dollars," he said, as he met her.

The child could not refuse the request of her father, although she knew that the use he would make of what she gave him would be improper. The two dollars were accordingly handed to him, when he went away after lingering for a few minutes.

At dinner-time he came home as full of liquor as ever, and at night went staggering off to bed. The next day showed the same result. On the next morning he asked his wife again for money. She had a dollar, and could not refuse it. This supplied his wants for that day. On the next morning Mrs. Martin took good care not to have a cent, and therefore he applied to her in vain. To Emily then he again repaired, and obtained the sum he asked for. This was continued for several weeks, his daughter not venturing to mention the subject to any one, until she became so distressed about it as to make it the topic of a special interview with her sister Anna.

"And now, sister, what shall I do?" she asked earnestly, after stating the matter freely to her.

"It is clear to my mind, Emily," replied her sister, "that you ought not to give father any money. But I see how painful a trial it will be to refuse him. As for myself, I must confess that I have not the resolution to say no, if he should call upon me."

"I am almost distressed to death about it," Emily said. "If I mention it to my husband, I know that he will say that I am doing wrong, and insist upon my denying father at once. But he cannot truly appreciate the situation of a child thus placed towards her father."

"Still, Emily, I think that your plain duty is, to acquaint your husband with the truth, and be guided by him. He will direct none other than a right course, and the path of duty we must endeavor to walk in, no matter how painful it may be."

"I feel that what you advise is right, Anna, and I must make up my mind at once to act accordingly."

On that evening Emily informed her husband of what she had been doing. He sympathised with her deeply, and excused what she had done, but very correctly took the position that it would not do for her to continue her supplies. To relieve her from a positive refusal, however, he received from her all the money that she had, and they agreed that she should keep no small change about her.

On the next morning Mr. Martin came as usual, and asked for some money.

"I have not a dollar in the house, father," Emily replied, her heart beating heavily.

The old man looked at her steadily for a moment, and then said, half sternly,

"I never denied you a dollar in my life, Emily, and many hundreds have I paid for you."

His child burst into tears, and wept for a time bitterly: but she made no reply, for she could not. His cruel remark had fallen upon her heart with a sudden, smarting shock, that completely broke down her feelings.

Slowly and silently the old man at last arose and left the house, without uttering a word. Ere his tottering form faded from her eyes, Emily started once or twice to spring forward and restrain him; but, by a powerful effort, she was enabled to remain passive. For a long time after his departure she continued to weep from a sensation of exquisite pain.

To his eldest daughter the old man now repaired. Anna had not the resolution to say no to the request he preferred, and he obtained what he desired. On the next morning he came again, and so continued regularly, until she had to suffer a like severe trial with that which Emily had endured.

A few weeks longer Mr. Martin continued to keep up his regular supply of liquor by borrowing small sums from old business acquaintances, who, like his daughters, had not resolution at first to refuse him; then he ran up scores at various drinking-places, until no one would trust him. Driven almost to desperation, he entered, early one morning, the tavern of a man who was known to have but little regard for the opinions of others. All he cared for was to make money.

"Give me a glass of brandy, Hugh," the old man said, as he came up to the counter.

"Pay me the old score, Martin."

"I will do it in a few days."

"So you have been saying for a week past. Pay that first, and then I may trust you again."

"Look here, Hugh, I 'm a good customer you know, and worth retaining," the old man said, leaning over the counter with a serious air.

"Oh, yes, good enough if you pay your way."

"Exactly. Now I have hit upon a plan by which you can not only get what is due you, but secure my entire custom."

"Well?"

"Trust me for as much as I want every day, until my bill runs up to fifteen or twenty dollars. Then warrant me on the account, and I will at once confess judgment. You can order a commitment to be made out on the spot, and have me sent to jail. It will only be necessary then to send word to one of my married daughters that I am in jail, and your account will be paid on the instant. How does that strike you?"

"It is capital."

"Then give me some liquor, for I am burning up with thirst."

Hugh Murphy handed him a decanter, from which he poured nearly a tumbler full of brandy. Before raising it to his lips, he took from a box on the counter a piece of lemon peel, chewed it for a few moments, and then put the glass to his mouth. But the odor of the liquor suddenly nauseated his stomach, the healthy tone of which was entirely gone, and he was compelled to return the glass to the counter. The lemon peel was again resorted to, and some of its juice swallowed; then holding his nose with the fingers of one hand, he raised with the other the glass to his lips, and turned its contents off with the same convulsive rapidity that one swallows a nauseous dose of medicine. After this he stood very still for about a minute, until the stimulating effects of the brandy had time to bring back the tone of his stomach. He was then able to take two or three glasses more, each containing about half the amount of the first, when he was ready to enter upon the regular business of the day, which was to drink about every half hour.

Anna's husband had left only a few minutes for his store, one afternoon about two weeks after this time, when a man called and asked to see her.

"I am sorry to say, madam, that your father has just been sent to jail," he said, on obtaining an interview with her. "I am the officer whose duty it was made to convey him there, and I have thought it but right that you should be instantly informed of the fact."

"My father in jail!" poor Mrs. N—— exclaimed, turning pale. "Who put him there?—what is he in for?"

"He has been committed, madam, by a man named Hugh Murphy, to whom he owes a bill of eighteen dollars."

"He must not stay there, sir," Anna said promptly; "how shall I obtain his release?"

"Simply by a payment of the debts and costs."

"That I will of course do; and as you, sir, have been so kind as to bring the news of his imprisonment, can I so far trespass on your kindness as to make you the bearer of his release?"

"I will do it with pleasure, madam," was the officer's courteous reply.

The amount of debt and costs was handed to the officer, who immediately went to the jail and obtained the infatuated old man's release.

As soon as he was gone, Anna repaired to her mother's and without acquainting her of the fearful fact she had learned, waited with much anxiety for her father's return. He came in at last, as if nothing had happened; but Anna could not restrain herself.

"O, father!" she ejaculated, coming up to him quickly and grasping his hand, "is it possible that they have had you in jail?"

"In jail!" Mrs. Martin said, in a tone of surprise and alarm, at once springing to her feet.

"Yes, they have had me there," the old man said, with some excitement in his tone; "but thanks to your prompt attention, Anna, I am at liberty once more."

He then explained to his wife and daughter that he had owed a debt to Hugh Murphy, who had warranted him, and put him in jail before he could send word to any of his friends. They, of course, had not the most remote suspicion of the whole truth.

This circumstance was deeply mortifying and distressing to the whole family, the more so as it seemed to effect not the slightest change in Mr. Martin's habits, and indicated the beginning of a new series of troubles.

A month only passed away when Anna was again notified that her father had been imprisoned. This time she went to her husband, as the bill was nearly thirty dollars, and at the suit of the same individual who had before had him committed. She had never mentioned the fact of the former imprisonment, but now she related it all.

"It is indeed a hard case, Anna," her husband said, with much tenderness in his manner, "and for your sake I will at once have him released, although I feel convinced that the best thing would be to let him remain there for at least a week."

"I have no doubt but that it would," Anna replied, the tears coming to her eyes, "but he is my father, and I cannot bear the thought of his remaining in that dreadful place an hour."

Mr. N—— did not feel like urging the matter, and so paid the debt and had the old man again released. Scarcely a month had passed away, ere the same scene was acted over once more, the vile wretch whose cupidity had prompted him to be a party in the matter, delighted at the success of the business.

As soon as Mr. N—— became aware of this third imprisonment, he made up his mind as to a plain course of duty. He at once called all the family together, and together the matter was talked over. Anna and Emily plead hard for their father, but it was resolved that he should not be released.

"If we pay this debt," argued Mr. N——, "that miserable creature, Murphy, will again credit him, and again resort to the same mode of enforcing payment. But if we suffer him to lie in prison, two ends will be gained: Murphy will lose his money, and refuse in consequence to trust him any longer, and he will be cut off from liquor for the time he is compelled to remain there."

Every one was convinced that, painful to their feelings as it might be, it was the best thing that could be done to let him stay in jail just so long as the grog-shop keeper felt disposed to retain him there.

The next thirty days were days of severe affliction of mind to his wife and children, who were constantly pained by applications from him, begging to be released. Every thing was done to make him comfortable. He was supplied with a good bed, nourishing food, and was visited frequently by his family. But all his entreaties for release, or to be supplied with liquor were unavailing. For the first few days he trembled on the verge of *mania a*

potu; but the judicious treatment of an able physician prevented the full exhibition of this terrible disease. The tavern-keeper who had imprisoned the old man, determined that he would not be outdone, and so continued every week to advance the jail fees, for four successive weeks, when, finding that others were as earnest in the matter as himself, he declined losing any thing more, and so permitted Mr. Martin to come out.

Having abstained for thirty days, his family and friends made a strong effort to induce him to abandon entirely the debasing vice of drunkenness. He promised, and made a feeble but brief effort. Long before the first week of his release had expired, he came home intoxicated. He had found a half dollar in his wife's drawer, and had drunk within an hour as much liquor as it would buy. The insatiable desire that had been suspended in a degree, now came back upon him with almost maddening intensity. Liquor he must have at any and all hazards. Murphy would not, of course, trust him again, nor could he obtain liquor on trust anywhere, for wherever he was known he owed bills for drink. Still, his intolerable desire must be satisfied. His first debauch, after his release from imprisonment, put him in bed for the balance of the day. On the next morning he awoke early, and went out to seek for liquor, he hardly knew where. He had been in the street, however, but a few minutes, when an expedient struck him, and he proceeded direct towards Light street wharf, along which he passed quickly until he came to the neighborhood of Federal Hill, when he turned off into a small street called York street. He had not proceeded far along this before he came to a shop where old clothes were bought, sold, or exchanged, and grog dealt out likewise to a very low class of customers, principally negroes.

"Have you an old vest that will fit me?" he asked, as he entered this vile place.

"O, yes," said the keeper, smiling, and coming forward with the same kind of alacrity that is exhibited by the spider when an unlucky fly finds its way into its den.

"I want to exchange this handsome one which I have on for a more common article, and get the difference."

"O, certainly, certainly. But we never pay out money here, you know. We always credit in drinks."

"Show me some vests, then."

A pile of second-hand garments of the kind he asked for were taken from the shelf, and displayed before him. After trying on two or three, he selected one much worn and faded, and was told that he should have credit for three quarters of a dollar in the exchange. This was at once agreed to, and the old vest at once assumed the place of a handsome silk one.

Old Mr. Martin now began to feel the absolute necessity of not only husbanding his resources, but of drinking the cheapest kind of liquor. He therefore called for whiskey.

"Will you have a three cent or a fip glass?" asked the grog-seller.

"A three cent glass," was the reply.

About the same quantity of a common article of whiskey as he obtained of brandy ordinarily for a fip, was poured out for him. The shop-keeper did n't trust *his* customers to help themselves.

Now came the serious effort to drink it. Lemon peel was resorted to, and holding of the nose, but all to no purpose—the liquor would not remain on his over-tried and weakened stomach.

"Give me a two cent glass," the wretched old man said, after waiting two or three minutes; "perhaps it will stay now."

A two cent glass was poured out, and poured down, but it came back again as suddenly as water from a red-hot surface.

"Ugh!" ejaculated the drunkard, "this is wretched work! Give me another."

"A two center or a three center?"

"A two center of course. It won't do to waste three centers in this way."

Another glass was poured out, which Martin held in his hand for perhaps two minutes, attentively consulting all the time the condition of his stomach, which, from the stimulating effects of the small portion of the fluid that remained adhering to its coatings, was gradually, but very slowly, coming up to that tone which would enable it to bear its daily burdens.

"I think it will stay now," he said, raising the glass, and turning it quickly off.

This was followed by two or three retchings, not powerful enough, however, to throw off what he had taken.

"That will do, I believe," he said, with an air of satisfaction, as the spasmodic action of the stomach subsided; "now give me a three center."

Six three cent glasses of a vile, burning stuff, called whiskey, a cheap and poisonous article, were now drank before he left the shop, when the old man turned away, and directed his steps homeward, where he arrived at the regular breakfast hour. His wife saw by the steadiness with which he carried his cup of coffee to his mouth, that he had been drinking, and she also noticed something unusual in his appearance, but could not make out what it was. How he had obtained the liquor was a mystery, for she knew that he had no money, and did not believe that any one would trust him. The feeble hope that had been gaining strength during thirty days of sobriety, was now all scattered to the winds.

During the day and evening he exhausted the credit which he had obtained in the morning, and returned home just able to keep his feet.

On the next morning before breakfast he was out again, and at the same place exchanged a new hat for an old one. This supplied his wants for the day. Having once begun this system, he found it to act well, and so continued it. His coat was next given to the grog-seller for an old, shabby affair, and a credit for liquor of five dollars. He did not come home on this day until evening, hoping thus to elude the observation of his wife on his changed appearance. He came in as quietly as he could, and groped his way up to the chamber, not of course without being heard, where he undressed himself and got into bed. His head had hardly touched the pillow before he was sound asleep.

When Mrs. Martin came up, her attention was at once attracted by the old coat, which she lifted hurriedly, and examined throughout. The hat and vest she had noticed before. Clasping her hands together with a despairing emotion as she let the soiled and worn garments fall to the floor, she sunk into a chair while a sick faintness passed over her.

"What *is* to be done!" she at length murmured, rising and beginning to pace the room backwards and forwards. "O, this infatuation is dreadful!"

It was long after she had retired before Mrs. Martin could find rest from her troubled thoughts in sleep. She fully perceived the new trial that awaited them, for she well understood the meaning of the change in his garments. It would now be impossible to keep him respectable, even decent in appearance. There

were none but his two sons-in-law who were able to purchase him clothing, and she could not expect them to keep him furnished with a supply of decent garments, to be regularly sold or exchanged in order to get money to buy liquor. The lateness of the hour at which she finally sunk to rest, caused her to sleep more soundly as the night waned. When she finally awoke, it was an hour after sunrise. Her husband had already arisen and gone. The breakfast hour arrived, and she waited and waited for him, but he came not. Then she sat down with her little girl, and swallowed a few mouthfuls, but with a heavy heart. Slowly the morning hours rolled away, and dinner time came; but her husband returned not—nor did he make his appearance in the evening, nor all through the night.

Alarmed and distressed, she called to see her son-in-law, Mr. N——, at an early hour on the next morning, and told all that she had observed in regard to the changed clothing, and his subsequent absence. Mr. N—— was deeply pained at the relations and proposed that nothing should be said to his wife on the subject, while he and Emily's husband made an effort to find the infatuated old man. Mrs. Martin accordingly returned home, and the young men, after consulting together, started out in search of their father-in-law.

They first proceeded to the neighborhood of Frederick and Water streets, it having been before ascertained that he was in the habit of visiting some of the shops in that vicinity. To an inquiry made in one of the liquor-stores kept by a vulgar-looking Irish woman, they were told that an old man, answering to their description of Mr. Martin, had been in her shop only an hour before for liquor, but that she had refused him because he had no money.

"Which way did he go after he left your shop?" inquired one of the young men.

"Down Frederick street towards the wharf," was the reply.

They turned their steps in that direction, and by inquiry traced the individual described by the Irish woman to another grog-shop half way down to Pratt street. There they were told that he was up stairs, and they ascended a pair of filthy, rickety stairs, to a kind of ill-lighted loft above. A wretched looking man, in soiled and tattered garments, sat half reclining upon the floor. A single glance told them that he was not the individual they were

seeking. But he was not the only miserable inmate of this cheerless apartment. There were, besides himself, his wife and five little children. A dark-green shade was bound over the woman's eyes, and it was evident that she saw but imperfectly. A table was on the floor, around which the children stood receiving their morning meal.

The first impulse of the two men was to retire the moment they ascertained their mistake. But a glance through the apartment, as soon as their eyes became so used to the dim light as to distinguish objects clearly, made them pause.

"Won't you sit down, sirs?" the woman said, advancing and placing before them two old chairs without backs, the only seats of any kind which the room contained.

Mechanically N—— took the proffered seat, and his companion imitated his example. A glance or two sufficed to make them acquainted with the nature of the meal which the mother had prepared for her little ones. In the centre of the table stood a large earthen pie-dish, a section of which had been broken out almost down to the bottom. To make it hold what had been placed in it the broken side had been elevated by a small brick-bat. It contained what was intended for a kind of soup, consisting of two hock-ends of bacon, which one of the children had picked up in the street, where they had been thrown to the hogs, boiled in water to extract all the nutritious matter that remained. Besides the broken pie-dish that contained this soup, there was a smaller one, broken in a very similar manner, and supported on its edge after a like fashion. Into this smaller dish the mother would lade with an old pewter spoon, half of the handle of which had been broken off, a portion of this miserable food, and then hand the spoon to one of the children, who eat while the rest waited impatiently for their turns to come. So eager for food were all these little ones, the oldest only about eight years of age, that they heeded not the presence of strangers. While this operation was going on, N—— said to his brother-in-law, in a low trembling whisper,

"Wait here a moment."

And then went hurriedly down stairs. He was gone but a few minutes, when he returned with two or three loaves of bread, and a large piece of cold ham, which he had obtained at an eating-house in the neighborhood. These he placed upon the table, and

again seated himself mechanically. Instantly the table was in commotion. The mother quickly grasped a loaf, and breaking it into smaller portions, threw piece after piece to her little group of starving children, who seized the opportune supper and eat ravenously. The drunken husband and father, who, until now, had remained passive upon the floor, came forward to partake of the food, and crowded into a place at the table. There was evidently not a knife in the room, for the mother took the meat in her hand and tore off portions of it, which she distributed around, her husband appropriating a share, and eating with a keen relish. As for her, she tasted nothing until all were supplied, and then seemed to force the food into her mouth, and eat it with no appetite.

"Horrible!" whispered one of the visitors.

"It makes me sick," responded the other.

"Who could have dreamed that such misery existed in this city!" N—— added, an expression of pain passing over his face.

He then drew the poor woman on one side, and learned from her that her husband had become so abandoned as not only to refuse to work at all, thus burdening her with his support, but that he had carried off, at different times, and sold them for liquor, almost every article of furniture, until she had not a bed, plate, cup, knife or fork in the house. That while she could do anything, she was in the habit of going out to whitewash, and clean houses, but that her sight had suddenly failed her, so that she had become nearly blind, and thus unable to do anything for her children, who were really in a starving condition. He learned also that she was living in the loft they occupied, at a rent of an eleven-penny bit a week, and that, as there were five weeks rent due, the landlord below had threatened to turn her into the street with her children on the next day, if not paid.

Slipping a five dollar note in her hand, with a caution not to let her husband know that she had any money, he promised to send her a supply of good nourishing food, and then the two young men hurried away, with their feelings more deeply wrought upon by human misery than they had ever been in their lives.

Other sections of the city were searched, revealing new scenes of wretchedness undreamed of, but with no better success, and night at last came without their having heard any news of Mr. Martin. Their efforts were continued after nightfall, and made in the neighborhood of Light street and Federal Hill.

"Have you seen anything of an old man lingering about any of the grog-shops in this neighborhood for a day or two past?" they inquired of a man standing at the corner of Light and York streets.

"What, a drunken old fellow that exchanged all his good clothes for old ones?"

"The same, I presume."

"Yes, I saw him about here to-day."

"Do you know where he is?"

"No. But I suppose he is sleeping off his liquor on the soft side of a board somewhere about here."

"I don't understand you, sir," one of his questioners said.

"Then I must explain, I presume. Gentlemen of your cloth don't know all that's going on in this world. You see, then, when people get so low that they can't afford to hire a bed to sleep in, we have the means of accommodating them with a good, dry floor in these parts, for one, two, or three cents a night, according to the quality of the accommodation."

"Is it possible that human beings become so debased and wretched as to be driven to such things?"

"Of course it is," replied the man, who was well pleased to hear himself talk, more especially as he had got hold of listeners to whom his news was news indeed.

"How do such people live?" asked N——.

"In various ways—but principally on grub."

"Grub—grub? What is that, pray?"

"Don't you know what grub is?"

"No—certainly not."

"Well, then, I will tell you. We have two or three pretty hard customers in this neighborhood, who fear nothing on this side of the gallows. They keep a kind of eating, drinking, and lodging houses, and stand prepared to buy almost anything you choose to bring along, so that they can get it at about one-tenth of its real value. Well, they keep a parcel of dirty, lazy, drunken negro women and children about them, called 'grubbers.' One of these will start out for instance, in the morning, with her basket, and beg cold and broken victuals from door to door, until her basket is full. Then she will bring it in, and sell it for whiskey, and sometimes a little small change will be added, but usually the amount allowed for the 'grub' is passed to her credit

and she drinks it out, or gets tobacco with it, as she likes. The shopkeeper then selects the best pieces of bread, meat, or pie from the disgusting mass, and arranges them on clean plates. A meal off of these costs a fip. The next best is set out, at three cents a cut. What remains is thrown into a pot—meat, bread, fish, potatoes, pudding, and a dozen other things, and boiled down, into a kind of hash. This is what is called '*grub*,' and is sold at one cent a bowl. It is upon this, at one cent a meal, that drunkards of the lowest grade, white or black, live."

"Do many live thus?" was asked.

"Not many here, thank heaven! But in Philadelphia and New York, I am told, that very many are thus kept from starvation."

"But how do the wretches who live thus obtain liquor?"

"In various ways. Some by 'grubbing,' some by stealing, some by doing little odd jobs, as piling wood, putting away coal, &c. Besides, liquor is very cheap. A good deal of poor whiskey can be got in some of these shops for a cent or two. And to meet even the very lowest want in drinking, as in eating, many shops save the water in which the glasses are rinsed, and by adding a little more liquor give it some strength, and call it 'all sorts.' A good stiff glass of this is sold for a cent."

"Can you not direct us where we would be likely to find the old man we have alluded to?" they said, after listening to these painfully disgusting details. "You seem well acquainted with things in this neighborhood."

"Perhaps I can," he replied. "At least I have no objection to try."

He then led the way up an alley running parallel with York street, most of the houses in which seemed to be inhabited by blacks of a low order.

"Let us go in here," their guide said, pausing before a dilapidated frame tenement; "this, I believe, is one of the sleeping dens."

He opened the door with little ceremony, and they followed him, not without some fears, for they knew neither the individual conducting them, nor the place into which they were going. The room entered by them was dimly lighted by a single lamp, scarcely brighter than a taper, throwing its flickering rays over a dark mass of human beings, stretched upon the floor. Old and

young, black and white, male and female, all mingled there in strange revolting confusion.

A few muttered curses met their intrusion as they proceeded to search for the old man among these. But he could not be found, and they retired, sick with the suffocating stench of the room, and half resolved to look no further.

But a consciousness that it would never do to return home that night without finding him, if possible, made them resolve to persevere. They were more successful at the next place to which their conductor carried them. They found the old man sleeping with half a dozen others, in a room attached to the shop where he had exchanged his clothing. All efforts to awake him proved vain; a carriage was obtained, and his insensible body carried home. Too drunk to be able to walk, he had been assigned a place on the floor to sleep—price of lodgings were, of course charged at the bar.

When the whole family became fully conscious of the still lower depth of degradation into which the old man had sunk, and of his utter abandonment of all regard to feeling and propriety in his actions and appearance, words cannot express their pain, discouragement, and mortification. They could not see him going about in public places with old, worn, and soiled garments—and yet, now that he had begun the system of selling his clothes, they felt that they might be constantly buying him new ones, only to supply him with the means of procuring liquor, if they attempted to regard his appearance.

At first, however, under the feeble hope that he would not again resort to that expedient for the purpose of supplying his thirst for strong drinks, a new suit of clothes was provided for him.

"He certainly will not sell these," Anna said to her mother, on the afternoon of the day on which the new clothes had been furnished him, as the two sat conversing near a window at the house of the former.

"I hope not, Anna; but I have my fears."

"How can he do so!" Anna ejaculated, half musingly, and then there ensued a troubled silence, for neither could suggest comfort or thought of hope to the other.

Thus had each sat, for several minutes, their feelings painfully oppressed, when Mrs. Martin suddenly exclaimed, in a tone of agony,

"Merciful Heavens! Can that be your father?"

Anna instantly sprang to her feet, and strained her eyes eagerly in the direction indicated by her mother. Nearly opposite sat an old man on a cellar door, his clothes covered with dust and dirt, whose general appearance was that of Mr. Martin, only that the hat which covered his head was an old, worn, white hat —while his own was new and black, when he went out in the morning. Half-a-dozen boys, black and white, were gathered around, and were using all their juvenile ingenuity to annoy him. One would pull his hat down over his eyes, another would go behind and push him suddenly forward, while another more regardless, would gather up handfuls of dust and shower it over him.

"It can't be father, ma," Anna said, trembling from head to foot, and growing deadly pale, "and yet how much it looks like him."

"Your father's hat was a black one," Mrs. Martin said, still eagerly running her eyes over the wretched man who had attracted their attention.

"But he may have sold it," pursued the daughter.

At that moment the old man made an effort and succeeded in gaining his feet, at which his little crowd of tormentors set up a loud shout of derision, one pulling at his coat-tail, another pushing him forward, while another attempted to trip up his heels. He had only proceeded thus a few paces, when he fell forwards over the curbstone, and struck his head upon the rough pavement with a violent concussion. As he fell, Anna caught a glimpse of his face. It was, indeed, her own father. Quick as thought she ran down stairs, and sprang at a few bounds across the street. The energy of her manner at once caused the little group of boys to recede from him, as she stooped down, and with a strength superior to her natural physical powers, lifted him up and drew him upon the pavement.

"For the love of Heaven, carry him across the street for me!" she then ejaculated, lifting her head, and looking into the faces of a few adult by-standers, with a wild, pale, agitated countenance.

Her request was instantly obeyed, and her father taken into her house and laid upon a bed. The presence of a crowd pressing into her chamber, restored to Mrs. N—— in some degree a

more distinct consciousness of what was passing around her. Her request for all to retire had its effect; for a few saw the propriety of doing so, and the others followed their example. No external injury being apparent, Anna and her mother commenced by bathing his head and face with cold water, and soon found to their relief that he commenced breathing regularly, though he showed but few signs of returning consciousness. Feeling still troubled about him, the physician was called in, who assured them, on examining him, that rest was all he needed. The passage of a few hours verified his prediction.

During six months longer old Mr. Martin continued to procure the means for obtaining the gratification of his appetite for liquor by selling or exchanging his clothes, until his children became utterly discouraged, and refused any longer to replace them, except where it became necessary to cover his nakedness. As a last resort, during the severe winter of 18—, he accepted an offer to cry oysters about the street, for as much liquor as he could drink. Six glasses an hour was the stipulation. The unfeeling wretch who thus engaged him, accompanied the cart, by the side of which the old man walked, crying oysters through the streets and alleys of a city, wherein a few years before he was accounted wealthy and respectable, and in which still resided his wife and five children, moving in a circle of education and refined intelligence. A few hours only had passed before Martin had to support himself by holding on to one of the cart shafts. In this situation he went by the store of one of his sons-in-law, who took him away from his unfeeling employer, and had him conveyed home, half dead with cold and intoxication. A violent attack of delirium tremens followed, from which he recovered after lingering a long time on the brink of the grave.

The moderate drinker had now reached his lowest point. From one, two, and three glasses, his appetite had increased until it demanded at the rate of fifty and sixty glasses a day. As he slowly recovered his strength from this violent attack of illness, his family surrounded him with their last and almost despairing efforts to induce him to reform, by urging him to join the Washington Temperance Society. To their delight and surprise he at once agreed.

I was present when he came up and subscribed his name to the pledge—it was on the night of my sixth visit to their meet-

ings. His act, for his case was well known to nearly all, caused a new thrill of pleasure to awaken in the breast of each member —and nerved them all with a new determination to persevere.

Often since then have I seen that old man in the street, at church, and in public assemblies with his daughters, whose attentions towards him were of the most affectionate character. It was a sight that always warmed my heart. Two years and more have passed away since his reformation, and he is yet true to his pledge, and all around him feel the utmost confidence that he will remain so. His untiring devotion in the cause of temperance is their guaranty, for there is no sphere of safety so strong as that of active usefulness.

THE BOTTLE AND THE PLEDGE.

CHAPTER I.

"HERE 's something to warm you," said old Morrison, keeper of the "Man and Monkey" grog shop, handing, as he spoke, a bottle of cordial to a journeyman mechanic who had been sent by his employer to do some work in the house of the liquor vender. The journeyman having finished his job, was about leaving, when thus addressed by the smiling landlord. He did not refuse the tender, although not in the habit of drinking, and no customer of old Morrison's. It was a sharp day in January, and words "something to warm you," sounded pleasantly; besides, the manner of the clever landlord was such as almost to put it out of the question for James Latimer to decline the little present, had the thought of doing so entered his mind—which we are sorry to say, was not the case.

"Do you serve every body in that way?" said a man who stood beside old Morrison's bar. This was after Latimer had left with his bottle.

"Not quite," returned Morrison, shrugging his shoulders and putting on a knowing look.

"He must be a good customer," remarked the man.

"He? Oh no! He never paid for a glass at my bar in his life," replied Morrison.

"Indeed! You must have taken quite a fancy to him. I never gave you credit for such an amiable weakness of character."

Morrison grinned and chuckled.

"Don't be uneasy," he said. "That bottle isn't thrown away. He 'll pay for it, twice over, before six months. A word in your ear"

And the liquor-seller winked his blear eye, wrinkled one side of his browned and blotched face, and laid a finger upon his ruddy nose. The man bent towards him, and he said—

"He 'll like the taste of that well enough to want more soon."

"Ah, yes! I understand. You know him, I suppose?"

"I have no particular acquaintance with him; but I 've had my eye upon him, for the last twelve months. He passes my door every day, but he never crossed it before."

"He 's not a drinking man?"

"Did you look into his face?"

"Yes."

"And ask that question? A drinking man! Not he. I doubt if he 's tasted liquor a dozen times in his life. But, I saw by the way he smacked his lips after a glass I gave him to-day, that the love of strong drink was in him. My word for it, by the time he gets through with that bottle, he 'll want some more."

"To supply which want, you will stand ready?"

"I will."

"You understand your business I see, Morrison," said the man.

"Forty years' experience ought to qualify me."

"Forty years! Have you sold liquor so long?"

"I have, and hope to be spared for as many years longer."

"To sell liquor?"

"Certainly. It 's a first rate business; and takes but little capital and labor. There is no risk in it. With one hand you pass your goods over the counter, and with the other hand draw in the money."

"And the profit is good?"

"First rate. Could n't ask for better."

"Well; go ahead, old chap!" returned the man. "If the devil claims your soul in the end, I hardly think there will be any one to dispute his title. And now mix us a brandy toddy; and let it be strong."

Nothing offended by this familiarity, Morrison prepared the toddy, and the man, lifting it towards his lips, said—

"Here 's to the bottle sent forth on its errand of——"

"Mercy!" the liquor seller supplied the word, as the man tasted his glass.

"As you please," replied the man, taking the glass from his

lips. "But see here," he added, looking thoughtful. "Aint you never troubled with ghosts?"

"Ghosts! What put them into your head?"

"The ghosts of dead drunkards, murdered wives, and starved children. Ha! Don't they never haunt you?"

"You seem disposed to be merry to-day," returned Morrison.

"It's a merry subject, isn't it?" The man spoke with irony.

"Not to me; and so we'll drop it." Morrison appeared, now, to be a little offended. He felt that his customer despised him.

"A word more," said the man, setting his half empty glass upon the counter, and speaking in a changed voice. "What is the name of the man whom you have favored with a tempting bottle, and where does he live?"

"Find that out by your wits," replied the liquor seller exhibiting an angry face.

"Where does he work?"

"Take the same answer," retorted Morrison.

"Look here, my old chap," said the man warming; "I call that a base trick of yours; and if I knew where to find this mechanic, I would give him a hint of your purpose, and advise him to throw the bottle into the street."

"Bah!"

"You can 'bah' as much as you please. But it does n't make your act any better. It 's bad enough for you to sell liquor to men like me and others, who have allowed the cursed appetite to form itself; but to tempt sober men to ruin, is an act that ought to shame the devil himself. Have n't you customers enough to satisfy you?"

"Please to walk out of my bar!" exclaimed Morrison, with a face in color like a bottle of his own claret.

The man hesitated a moment, and then turned and walked away, leaving the liquor seller fuming and fretting like a barrel of new beer.

James Latimer was a sober, industrious mechanic, with a wife and three children. Agnes, a tidy little girl, and very useful to her mother, was twelve years old, and little Lottie, two years of age, and still called the "baby," was the youngest. James was in his ninth year. Latimer was a first rate workman, and made good wages; and Polly, his wife, managed every thing so well, that they not only lived very comfortably, but were able to put by a little every year. A happier family was not to be found.

On the day Latimer received a warming glass and a bottle of cordial from Morrison, he went home to dinner, feeling in a very pleasant humor. The liquors he had taken produced an agreeable exhilaration. He held up the bottle to his wife, as he entered, and after laughingly telling the story of old Morrison's generosity, set it down upon the table, and taking little Lottie in his arms, danced around the room with her at a merry rate, the child crowing and patting his face with her tiny hands, while Jimmy clung to his legs and tried with all his strength to hold him fast. For ten minutes the happy father sported with his children, and the dinner being ready, he sat down to eat.

"I must try old Morrison's remedy for cold weather," he said after the meal, and drawing the cork, poured out a glass of cordial and drank it off.

"It does warm—that 's a fact. Come try some of it, Polly." And he filled the glass again, and handed it to his wife.

"Oh, no, no!" And Mrs. Latimer put up her hand.

"Yes, try it. If it 's good for me, it 's good for you. Drink it off. It 's nothing but cordial."

"No—no. I do n't want it."

"Nonsense! You must drink some. You do n't know how good it is. Here, just take a drop!" And he continued to hold out the glass.

Mrs. Latimer, thus urged, took the glass and sipped a little of the pleasant compound.

"Is n't it good?" enquired her husband.

"Yes; it is good," she replied.

"Then drink it all down." An invitation with which his wife did not refuse to comply.

Agnes looked on, and no shadow of the coming evil stole darkly across her young mind. Little Lotty and her brother, who played together from morning till night, as sportive and innocent as lambs, felt no pause in the sweet flow of their loving spirits. What did they know of evil? What had they to dread? They had looked at the bottle, and admired it as a novelty in the house; had touched it without fear; and let their hands rest upon it as something that could do no harm. Happy ignorance! Would that it could ever remain! But, an evil thing had entered the house, and no long time was to pass before its accursed presence would be felt, even by them.

CHAPTER II.

THE tavern keeper did not err in his calculation. A week had not elapsed before Latimer dropped in to see him, remarking, as he did so, while a shiver passed over him—

"It feels like Greenland out of doors, landlord. Can't you give me something to warm me?"

"That's just what I can do," replied Morrison, with a smile. What'll you have? Some hot whiskey punch or an apple toddy?"

"Which is best?" asked Latimer; and he laughed at his own question.

"Either of them is good enough. Suppose you try the whiskey punch. It will warm you to your finger ends."

"Very well; let it be whiskey punch, then. But don't make it too strong. I can't bear much. I'm not used to it."

"You are not half a man," said the landlord. "Why some of my customers can drink five or six punches in an evening and not feel it. A baby might push you over."

"Not so easily, my good neighbor; not so easily. I call myself a man, and am ready to match sinew and muscle with any one of my weight."

"And can't bear a single strong whiskey punch. Ho! ho! It won't do to make that boast here."

By this time the steaming glass of punch was ready, for Morrison never kept a customer waiting long. He could mix a glass of liquor against time with any one living. Latimer put it to his lips and sipped the pleasant compound.

"How do you like it?" asked Morrison. "Isn't it first rate?"

"It is: that's a fact." And he sipped again.

"I'm hard to beat on whiskey punches; or, indeed, any thing else in my line. Come in to-morrow night and take an apple toddy, or a gin sling."

"Perhaps I may," said Latimer, sipping again and again. "Certainly this is excellent."

"Does n't it warm you?"

"Yes, indeed; and to my finger ends, as you said."

"I know the effect exactly."

"Having tried it yourself, often?"

"Yes, and seen it tried on others a thousand times. A man who takes that medicine every day through the winter, will never be found barking and wheezing with cold, like a phthisicky wolf. He 'll not trouble the doctor, I 'll guarantee. But say, neighbor, how did you like that bottle of cordial?"

"So well, that I want another just like it."

"Ha! ha! I thought so. And what did the wife say to it? Did she try its virtue?"

"Oh, yes; and pronounced it the very thing. So, here 's the bottle," and he drew the article he named from a spacious pocket —"fill her up again."

"Aye, aye! Fill her up 's the word. Here, Bill"—to one of the bar-keepers—"draw a bottle of perfect love."

"Of what?" asked Latimer.

"Perfect love. We call it that, because all who drink it, love with a perfect love."

"You 're a merry chap, landlord," returned Latimer, who began to feel a little merry himself.

"We 're all merry here. We call this Good Fellows' Hall. Come and see us often, my man; I know you will like us."

"Perhaps I may."

"Do."

The bottle of cordial was handed over.

"How much?" asked Latimer.

"Three shillings," replied the landlord.

"And the punch?"

"Sixpence."

"That 's three and sixpence. Here 's a four shilling piece, you may give me the change in segars."

"How will you have them, in fours or threes?"

"Threes, I reckon."

"Here they are," and Morrison handed over the counter a box of segars. "They 're a prime article."

Latimer picked out three to suit him.

"Here, take another. We 'll call 'em fours for old acquaintance sake."

"You 're a clever sort of a chap, I see," said Latimer, in an excellent good humor with himself. The whiskey punch was doing its work.

"I call myself so," replied Boniface, "and so do my friends."

"Well, good evening to you," said Latimer.

"Wait, won't you sit down and look over the paper?"

"No, thank you, not now; I must go."

"Good-by to you, then, and see here, whenever you find an evening hanging heavily on your hands, drop in and look at us. I take twenty newspapers, and shall be glad to see you using them freely."

"Very well, much obliged for your kindness. Good evening."

"Good-by, then, if you will go; and God bless you."

Latimer returned home with his second bottle of cordial, which he and his wife managed to dispose of in two or three days, and then he went back for another; and this time tried one of Morrison's apple toddies.

"Why, bless us, neighbor! you are a real stranger," said the landlord, as he came in. "Where have you been? I hope the whiskey punch did not make you sick."

"Not quite—you must think I am a child."

"Oh no, not I. I believe you to be a man, every inch."

And, in his own way, Morrison flattered and excited the pleasant feelings of his victim, thus creating a desire to visit his house apart from the appetite for punch and toddies which he was seeking opportunities to form. That unnatural craving once implanted, and he knew Latimer would come without requiring an invitation.

Not a long time elapsed before the cordial became insipid to the taste of Latimer.

"What is this?" said his wife, one evening, as she poured out a glass from the newly replenished bottle.

"Something better than cordial," replied her husband. "Taste it."

The wife sipped a little, and making a wry face, spit it out.

"Brandy!"

"Good old cogniac. Get some water and sugar, and a little nutmeg, Polly, and I'll show you something better than all the cordials that ever were created.

The water, sugar and nutmegs were produced, and two glasses of toddy prepared.

"There! what do you think of that?" said the husband.

"It is good," replied Polly, as she tasted the mixed liquor.

"Better than cordial, is n't it."

"I do n't know. The cordial was a very pleasant drink."

"But not half so good as this. Wait until you have tried it a few times, and you 'll not think such meagre stuff as cordial worth naming."

And so it proved. The bottle never afterwards contained any thing weaker than brandy, from which a toddy was always prepared for the dinner table, and another to moisten the crackers and cheese that were eaten before going to bed.

Latimer had good wages, and was a steady, industrious hand, much liked by his employer. He lived very comfortably, and had laid up nearly two hundred dollars in the Savings Bank. But after the bottle came into his house, and he began to spend evenings at old Morrison's, his week's wages were usually all spent by the time the earnings of the next were received; and no very long period of time elapsed, before some extra demand for money required a draft upon the fund that had been gradually accumulating in the bank.

Notwithstanding the tavern keeper's eulogy upon his apple-toddies and whiskey punches, as being the best medicine in the world, Latimer lost more days from sickness in the year that followed than in the five that had gone before the time of his having been presented with the bottle. Nor was his wife's health so good. But they did not think of the real cause.

It is not at all surprising, that it took no longer a period than twelve months to exhaust the money that had been laid up. But this was not the only change. Latimer had grown discontented at home, and impatient with the children. Little Lotty was much oftener thrust petulantly aside than taken upon her father's knee, and the smallest fault of James was too frequently visited with blows under which even a man would have recoiled. There were also occasional violation of the peace between the father and mother themselves, accompanied by harsh words, or days of silence and estrangement on one side, and tears on the other. But still the bottle continued to do its work.

At last, Latimer came so frequently to the shop disguised with liquor, that his employer talked to him on the subject, and told him that, unless he mended his ways, he would have to discharge him. This had a temporary effect; but it did not last long. The principal change it produced, was a restriction of his appe-

LATIMER IS DISCHARGED FROM HIS EMPLOYMENT FOR DRUNKENNESS—THEY PAWN THEIR CLOTHES TO SUPPLY THE BOTTLE.—*Page* 273.

tite through the day, to give it greater license in the evening, and it was a common thing for him to go drunk to bed.

How, by this time, had all the pleasant aspects of home disappeared! Agnes was old enough to see the cause; but James and the fair-haired little Lotty felt the change without understanding its meaning. The boy, instead of bounding, happily, to the side of his father when he returned home, rather shrank from him, and Lotty approached and looked into his face timidly, her eye seeking for some of the love-expressions that once beamed from his countenance. Alas! they were not there then; but had gone forever.

At last the threatened blow fell. Latimer was discharged, and, on the strength of it came home reeling with intoxication.

"Discharged!" said his wife, turning pale with alarm when the truth was, on the next morning, announced to her. "What are we to do?"

"Give me a glass of brandy first. I 'm so faint I can hardly hold my head up."

A glass of raw brandy was brought, and he poured the burning fluid eagerly into his throat.

"Do?" he said, as he handed back the emptied glass; "I reckon there 's plenty more shops in town."

A week, and still Latimer was idle. His breath and appearance were enough to prevent his getting work. There were plenty of sober men to be had, and they monopolized the shops, to the exclusion of drunkards. By this time the last wages he had received were all gone, and biting want looked his family in the face. The distress of his wife, and the miserable aspect of every thing at home, drove him off to the tavern. But this could not buy food, and food must be had, for hunger had entered his dwelling.

"There is nothing to eat in the house!" said his wife, as he came in half tipsy, and after lighting his pipe, sat down before the grate, and thrusting his hands into his pocket, began to smoke —"and the children are hungry. What shall we do?"

"Hush up, will you?" growled the miserable man. Little Lotty, who had been pulling a toy about the floor when her father entered, dropped her plaything, and going up to where her brother James had sat quietly down, with his sad face and eyes turned towards his besotted parent, crept up into his arms, and

putting a hand around his neck, turned also to look at the strange and fearful sight, but without at all comprehending its meaning.

For a few minutes Mrs. Latimer sat bewildered and in tears. Then getting up, she went to a chest of drawers in the room, and, after looking through them, selected a few articles of clothing that she thought could be spared, and laid them out.

For days the bottle had been empty, and Mrs. Latimer's appetite craved the accustomed stimulus. In fact, she felt the want of brandy more than she did the want of food. Taking the bottle, therefore, from the closet, she drew her eldest daughter aside, and said to her:

"See here, Agnes, take these," and she handed her the garments she had selected, "to Moses, the Jew, and ask him to let you have a half a dollar on them. If he does so, he will give you a ticket with the money. Then go with this bottle and get a pint of brandy. As you come home, past the baker's, get two loaves of bread, and half a pound of cheese and three herrings from the grocer's. You will have sixpence left."

"Can 't I get some milk for Lotty? She 's had no bread and milk for a good many days, and she does n't like cheese?"

"No. There 'll be but sixpence left, and I want that for something else. So run along. Lotty will have to do with bread this time, and I 'm thankful to be able to get even that for her. I hope your father will get something to do soon, or we shall all starve."

Agnes went on her errand with her young feelings troubled. The Jew took the clothes on pawn for half a dollar, and she got the brandy, the bread, the cheese and the herrings, and brought home the sixpence change.

The sight of the bottle brightened Latimer wonderfully. He drank with his wife, and the children ate greedily the dry bread and cheese. Hunger made it sweet to them. For a little while, a lurid kind of light was in this wretched dwelling, and then all became again dark, cold and gloomy.

CHAPTER III.

Poor Agnes! It was new and strange work for her, this pawning of clothes to replenish the bottle, and get enough food to keep starvation from entering their comfortless home. Darkly fell upon her young spirit, a shadow of the wretchedness that was hurriedly approaching.

On the day after she had been to the Jew's, the bottle was again empty, and there was not a crust of bread in the closet. Again she went to the pawn-broker's with a garment — it was her mother's silk gown—and the Jew advanced two dollars upon it. The mother had expected to get at least five dollars on the dress, and she vented her disappointment in a way to make the poor child feel that she was to blame. The father scolded, and swore so terribly, that little Lotty shrunk into a corner, where she sat, looking at him fearfully over her shoulder. Agnes went into another room to give tearful utterance to the grief of her young heart, alone.

More than half of the sum received on the dress was spent in liquor, Agnes having to go out, almost daily, with the bottle, to get a fresh supply.

Soon, nearly all the spare clothing in the house had disappeared. Table and bed linen, the accumulations of years, was all gone; and most of Mrs. Latimer's and the childrens' best garments were in the hands of the Jew. Starvation was beginning to look them in the face.

"Do, James, try and get something to do," the wife said to her husband one morning, speaking in a fretful voice, as they sat eating their breakfast of dry bread. "It is n't right for an able-bodied man like you to be lazing about, and his wife and children on the brink of starvation. I know, if I was a man, I would find work somehow, if it was at sweeping the streets."

Hints, broad hints, had before been given; but they had done no good. Latimer would make some ill-natured response, and declare that he had looked the town over for work, without being able to get any thing to do.—With an angry imprecation he now arose suddenly from the table, and left the house.

The rebuke of his wife smarted him, because he felt that it was

justly merited. Under the impulse of his feelings he called at a shop and asked if they did not want a hand.

"Yes, a steady, sober hand," was answered.

"Won't I do? There is n't a better workman in town."

"We want a sober, steady hand, upon whom we can depend," said the person to whom he had applied. "Do you call yourself such?"

"I do," returned Latimer.

"Then your looks very much belie you; that 's all."

"Will you take me?"

"No, I believe not. We want a steady, sober hand — we employ no other. There is not a customer of old Morrison's in our establishment."

Latimer turned away, feeling rebuked and humbled, cursing himself, old Morrison, the bottle, and every thing else; and took as straight a course to the tavern of the man who had lured him on to ruin, as he could take. Morrison was standing behind his bar as his victim came in; but, now, he did not look smilingly upon his old customer, nor move forward and assume that attitude and expression which says so plainly, "What 'll you take?"— but remained leaning with his back against the shelves upon which were arranged his decanters, each with a lemon between by way of ornament, and to suggest the idea of punch.

"Give us some brandy, landlord," said Latimer as he came up to the counter.

But Morrison did not move from where he stood.

"Give us some brandy, I say, old fellow! Why do n't you move? Is that the way you serve a customer?"

Morrison, without moving from where he stood, placed his hand upon a door that opened towards him, and moving it so that the back became visible, pointed, meaningly, to sundry chalk marks thereon.

"Never mind; put another brandy down. I've just got a job of work, and will pay off the whole score on Saturday."

"Work? Have you got work at last?" enquired Morrison, his face relaxing a little from its sternness.

"Be sure I have. A first rate, steady job, at good wages."

"I am very glad to hear it." And, as the rum seller said this, he handed over the brandy bottle. "But take my advice, Latimer, and do n't steam it quite so hard as you have been doing.

Ease up a little, or it will be all over with you. I've been 'most afraid you were a gone case, as it was."

"Me?" And Latimer laughed low in his throat. "Don't be afraid of that, landlord; I'm as good a man as ever I was."

"I don't know, but you are. Call and see me again. Don't forget your old friends."

"I never do that, landlord," said Latimer, filling a second glass of brandy, and then taking a seat by the stove, where he soon fell asleep under the influence of the strong potations he had indulged.

As Morrison stood and thought, after his victim had placed himself by the stove, he began to doubt the story of his having got a job of work. When he saw his head begin to fall loosely from its equipoised position on his neck, his doubts confirmed themselves, and he came round from his usual place behind the bar, and taking Latimer by the shoulders, roused him up with a rough shake. The man awoke swearing profanely.

"Why don't you go to work, if you 've got a job," said Morrison. "Do you expect to pay off your score by sleeping in my bar room?"

Latimer's mind was too much in oblivion to understand what the landlord meant.

"Work?" he said, in a tone of bewilderment.

"Yes. Why don't you go to work."

"Work? I've got no work. Wish to Heaven I had. Work? You're joking, landlord. You got any work? I'll take half out at the bar."

"Haven't you got a job of work?" asked Morrison, in an angry voice.

"Me?" replied Latimer, still but half awake. "Me? No, indeed. I've looked the town over. I can't get any work."

"You lying, cheating rascal!" exclaimed Morrison, in a sudden, ungovernable fit of passion, dragging the half-intoxicated man from his chair, and throwing him towards the door. As he staggered away, he followed him up, and opening the door, pushed him with a torrent of oaths into the street. Latimer fell upon his face, but like many drunken men who fall, sustained little or no injury.

Instead of returning to abuse Morrison, which was the first impulse of his mind, he went reeling home.

Sad work had been going on there, in his absence. His landlord, whose repeated demands for money had not been satisfactorily answered, and who had already commenced legal proceedings against him, to which no attention had been paid, had issued an execution upon his furniture, and he found the officers of the law about removing the principal part of his household goods to satisfy the arrearages of rent.

"Hallo! What does all this mean?" he said, as he came in, staring at the men who were executing the law's behest, and then at his weeping wife and frightened children.

"It means," replied an impracticable looking old fellow, "that we have seized, and are taking your furniture for rent."

At this, the drunken man became furious, and swore that he would knock them right and left if they dared to put a hand upon any thing. He would see the landlord, he said, and make it all right.

"Do you know," said the stern looking old fellow, "that you are interfering with the officers of the law in the regular discharge of their duties?"

"Who cares for the officers of the law? Every man's house is his castle, and no one dares enter it. Clear out now, in quick time, or I'll make daylight shine through you."

And as Latimer said this, he seized the post of a bedstead; but before he had time to lift it from the floor, the old fellow took him by the collar with a vice-like grasp, saying as he did so—

"You'll go to prison for this, my lark. Come! We'll soon settle you."

Seeing her husband in the hands of the officer, and hearing the word prison, Mrs. Latimer started forward with a cry of alarm, and Agnes and the other children crowded around the officer, seizing hold of him, and imploring him with tears not to carry off the wretched husband and father.

"Oh, sir!" pleaded Mrs. Latimer, "let him go—let him go! He is not himself!—he did not know what he was doing! Oh, sir, let him go, and he will not interfere any more."

After some parley, the poor wretch was released from the tight grasp of the officer, and he shrunk off and seated himself by the fire.

While Latimer was away that morning, his wife had pawned her wedding ring and a small breastpin that had belonged to her

AN EXECUTION FOR RENT SWEEPS OFF THE GREATER PART OF LATIMER'S FURNITURE—THEY COMFORT THEMSELVES WITH THE BOTTLE.

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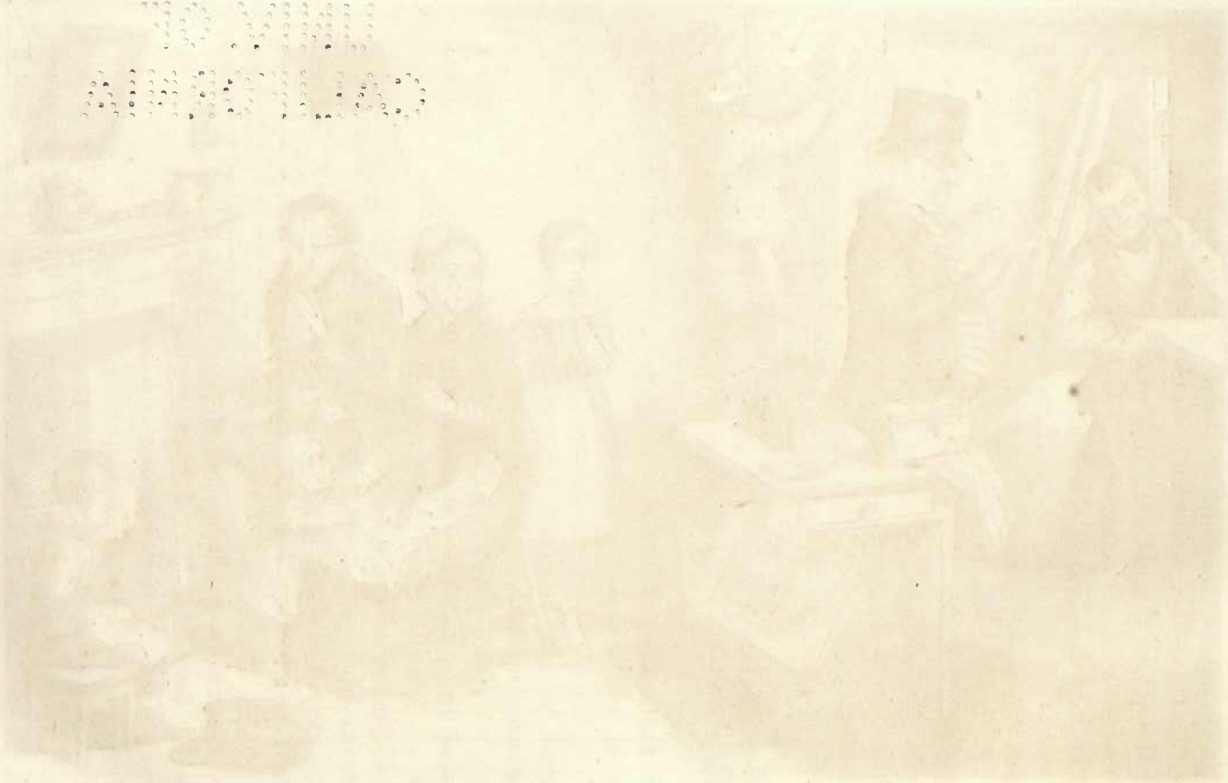


mother; and the instrument of all their misery was again full. This she brought out, and while the agents of the law stripped the furniture from the house, she sat down listlessly beside her husband, and they comforted themselves with the bottle!

Poor children! It was a heart-aching sight to see them. No mind-obscuring draught dimmed their perception of the misery that surrounded them. Every thing stood out in its sharpest reality. Even to little Lotty, they were all crushed down with a most heart-oppressing sense of evil.

At last the men who had intruded themselves, finished their dreadful work, and departed. How sad and desolate was the home they left behind; sadder and more desolate to the little ones than to the parents, who still comforted themselves with the bottle!

CHAPTER IV.

The officers of the law departed, and they were left alone, comforting themselves with the bottle; and so repeatedly were draughts of comfort taken, that, in the end, entire forgetfulness came, and in the arms of oblivion they sunk upon the floor, unconscious that around them were gathered their hungry, weeping children. Night came; the fire went out in the unreplenished grate, and, in darkness and sorrow the little ones gathered about their sister, and sobbed themselves to sleep.

After undressing James and Lotty, and putting them to bed, Agnes tried, but in vain, to arouse her father and mother from their drunken slumber. Their draughts from the bottle had been too deep; they still remained upon the floor, as insensible as logs.

For hours the child sat, grieving and weeping in the darkness of that cold room, the silence of which was only broken by the heavy breathing of her sleeping parents. Darker than even the room was her heart! and its chilliness, more than the air of the fireless apartment, caused a shudder to creep through her limbs.

At last, it must have been near midnight, the father aroused up, and went groping about the room, swearing and asking for a light. He did not stumble over the table nor strike himself against the drawers. The landlord's execution had saved him

from such disasters. Agnes, over-wearied with watching, had fallen into a doze. She started up and spoke.

"Where 's the light? Why do n't you get a light, you good-for-nothing little huzzy?" said Latimer, adding to the sentence a bitter oath.

"There is no candle," replied Agnes, trembling.

"Why is n't there a candle? Did n't you know the candles were out? Where 's your mother?"

"She 's asleep on the floor, sir."

"Asleep on the floor, indeed! Where?"

The loud voice of her angry husband reached Mrs. Latimer, the stupefying spirit imbibed from the bottle having, by this time, nearly exhaled itself away through the lungs and the pores of her body.

"Where 's the light?" she said, also, finding herself in total darkness.

"Yes: where is the light, sure enough?" responded the gruff voice of her husband.

"There 's no candle," said Agnes, again venturing to speak.

"Why did you let the fire go out, you idle creature, you!" replied the mother angrily.

"There is no coal," sobbed Agnes.

This, the mother remembered, was too true. And she also began to remember other things that she had forgotten in her drunken oblivion. No wonder that she became silent. The miserable father's memory also began to be more lucid; and he too ceased his angry, unreasonable demands.

"Where is James and Lotty?" the mother at length asked.

"They 're in bed," replied Agnes.

"Very well. It 's time you were in bed too."

Agnes needed no second injunction. She went silently from the room, the darkness concealing her tears.

Before retiring to their hard pallet upon the floor, which was now their sleeping place, Latimer and his wife, by a kind of common consent, groped about for the bottle, and, before seeking repose, drained its contents to the last drop.

There was a cold and gloomy reality about every thing in that wretched house on the next morning. No fire in the grate; no food in the house; no comfort in the bottle. All, alike, felt wretched.

Agnes was sent to a store near by to get trust for some coals and a little food; but she came home in tears. The keeper of the store had denied her, with harsh words.

"We must have fire, and something for the children to eat, Polly," said Latimer, shivering, and glancing involuntarily at the empty bottle which stood upon the mantel-piece.—"Is there nothing in the house to sell or pawn?"

Mrs. Latimer went to the closet, and after looking through it for some time, selected an armful of dishes, the coffee-mill, and castor. These Agnes was directed to carry to old Moses, and place in pawn for whatever he would advance on them. The child got a dollar for them. Enough coals for the day were procured, some food bought, and the bottle again replenished. With a shilling in his pocket, Latimer went, after breakfast, to look for something to do; but he forgot his errand, staid all day in a cheap drinking house, and came home at night drunk and quarrelsome.

On the next morning, when he was sober enough to hear it, Latimer was informed by his wife that the landlord had been there, and left orders for them to vacate the house immediately, or he would have them put out into the street.

A few more of the few things that remained to them were disposed of in the way they had already parted with so many articles, and coals, food and spirits supplied for another day. Latimer then went out to look for a new home. He found a room in the third story of an old, tottering house. The rent was three dollars a month, and he engaged it without waiting to consult his wife. When he mentioned where it was, she had many objections to make, but he angrily overruled them. Drink had made a brute of the once tender and considerate husband and father.

Into this comfortless place the family of Latimer moved, with the miserable remnant of their household goods. One room held, without difficulty, what had been the furniture of three.

Hopeless of getting work at any of the shops, the degraded man, in order to obtain money to buy liquor, the thirst for which was daily on the increase, was now willing to do any little jobs he could pick up in the streets; such as throwing in and piling up wood, putting away coal, carrying home baskets from the market, or baggage from the car houses or steamboat landings.

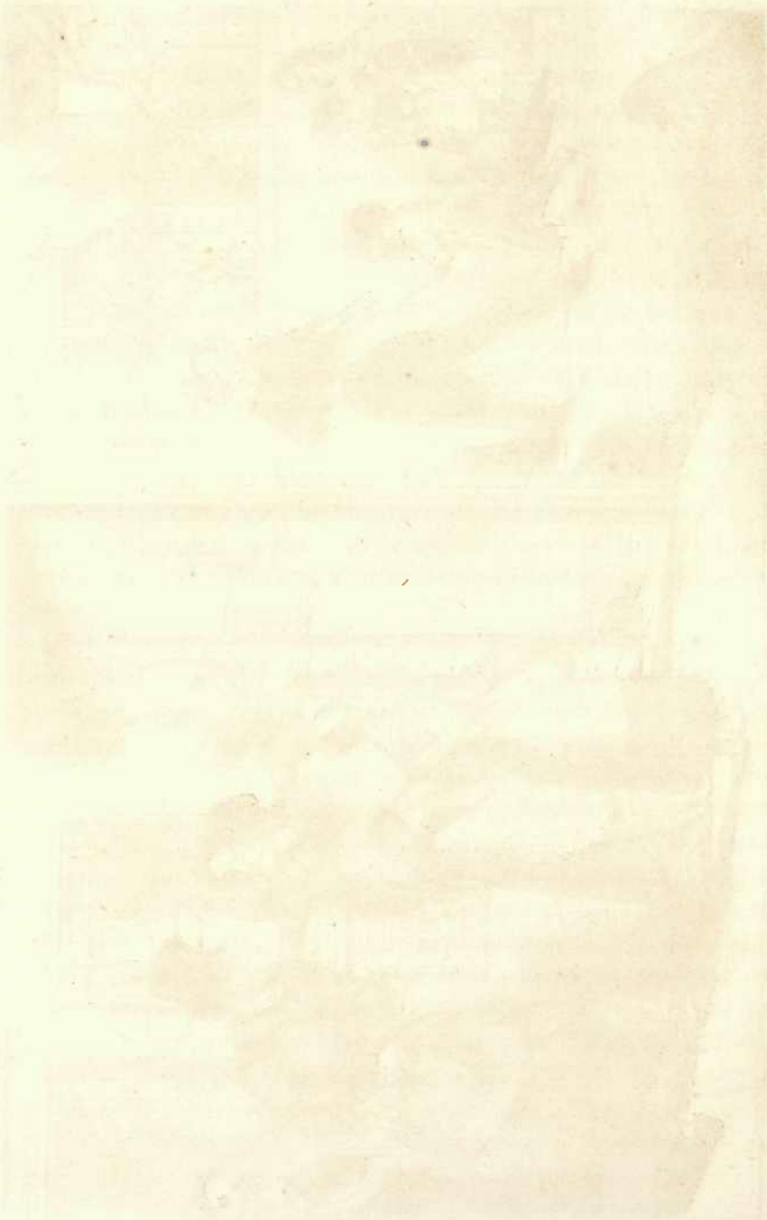
In this way he earned a two or four shilling piece every now or then, which generally went to supply his own thirst for liquor.

The great evil in Mrs. Latimer's case, was the fact of her having also acquired a love for the bottle. Had her appetite remained untainted, neither herself nor her family could have sunk into the want and misery that are now their unhappy portion. She had resources in herself that would have been developed, and pinching want and keen privation, if not sorrow, would have been kept from their home. But, in seeking to throw his toils about one victim, Morrison had made two. In securing a customer, he had ruined a whole family.

Without any income whatever, five persons to feed and the bottle to supply, Mrs. Latimer soon disposed of every valuable article in their possession, even to the children's bed; and finally, to keep from absolute starvation, and gain something by which the insatiate appetite that was ever craving its unnatural stimulus could be supplied, drove Agnes and James into the street to beg. The little they obtained by this means proved insufficient, and the mother, too, at last went forth with poor little Lotty in her arms to solicit that for which intemperance had unfitted her to gain by honest labor.

Day after day, in cold and heat, did she go forth with her children, to implore charity. The exposure proved too much for the youngest of her children. The wind blew too roughly, the rain fell too chillingly, the sun shone too hotly upon the child, Lotty; and disease began to lay hold upon its tender form. Wearily, for many a mile, was it compelled to drag its yielding limbs by its wretched mother's side, until, at last, it could go no further. At first, it drooped by the way, after having kept up for hours, and then scolded and dragged along, it bore up still longer; but, at last, it could not support its weary limbs, and the mother was forced to take it in her arms. On each succeeding day, the period for which Lotty held out became shorter and shorter, until, at last, the child could no longer stand alone, and then it was taken out, and its pale, suffering face exposed to the view of strangers to excite their pity.

LATIMER, BEING UNABLE TO OBTAIN EMPLOYMENT, HIS FAMILY ARE DRIVEN BY POVERTY TO BEG; AND BY THIS MEANS THEY STILL SUPPLY THE BOTTLE.—*Page* 282.



CHAPTER V.

Poor little Lotty! Once a loving, beautiful and happy child —now wan and wasted, and with a face so full of sadness and suffering, that those who gave to the sick mother for the sake of the sick babe in her arms, sometimes felt unhappy for days, as the image of the child arose up to haunt them.

No one seemed to care much for Lotty, but Agnes; and when she came in at night, with the money she had picked up through the day, she always took the child in her arms; and it would lay its emaciated face down upon her breast, and look up at her with its large, glistening eyes, and not move them for minutes and minutes at a time. Agnes loved her little sister more and more tenderly, as the wasting disease at its vitals went deeper and deeper; and she often plead for it to be left at home. But no— Lotty must go out every day; in cold or heat; in rain or sunshine. Agnes did not understand that it was the pale, thin face of her little sister that brought her mother so many sixpences and shillings, while she was rarely able to get more than a penny at a time; nor did she know that the brutalized mind of her depraved mother, was pleased rather than distressed, as she saw the face of Lotty exhibiting deeper and deeper marks of suffering, for these gave her a more certain hold upon the sympathies of those to whom she appealed for charity.

Shocking as this is to think of, it was yet too true. Agnes often begged to have the doctor sent for; but the mother was content to get medicine without advice, from patent nostrum sellers, who too often recommend any thing for the sake of the money, and often as certainly destroy health and life as the rumseller himself. Many, many nauseous doses were forced down the reluctant throat of the poor child by the passionate mother; and many were the blows it received because its weak stomach made it turn from, and with cries, resist the cruel infliction. And all that it took was poison to its weak body; for it excited the disease and made it incurable.

One morning—the sleepless child had moaned all night in pain —the mother rose from her hard mattress, thrown upon the floor, and after preparing some breakfast, ordered Agnes and James,

who were crouching by the few sticks that blazed feebly upon the hearth, to go out to their day's employment—begging. Lotty was in the arms of Agnes, and her face lay close against her sister's bosom. She was breathing quick and gaspingly, and with every breath, uttered a low moan.

"What shall I do with Lotty?" asked Agnes.

"Put her down on the bed there," replied the mother, in a fretful, impatient voice, while the child shrunk closer to her sister.

"She is very sick, mother," said Agnes.

"She 's no more than she was yesterday. So put her down. You just want to sit there, idling your time. Put her down, I tell you."

The child began to cry as Agnes arose and went towards the mattress that lay on the floor.

"Stop that crying!" exclaimed the father, angrily. He sat smoking his pipe by the fire-place, his feet upon the mantle.

But Lotty cried on, though feebly.

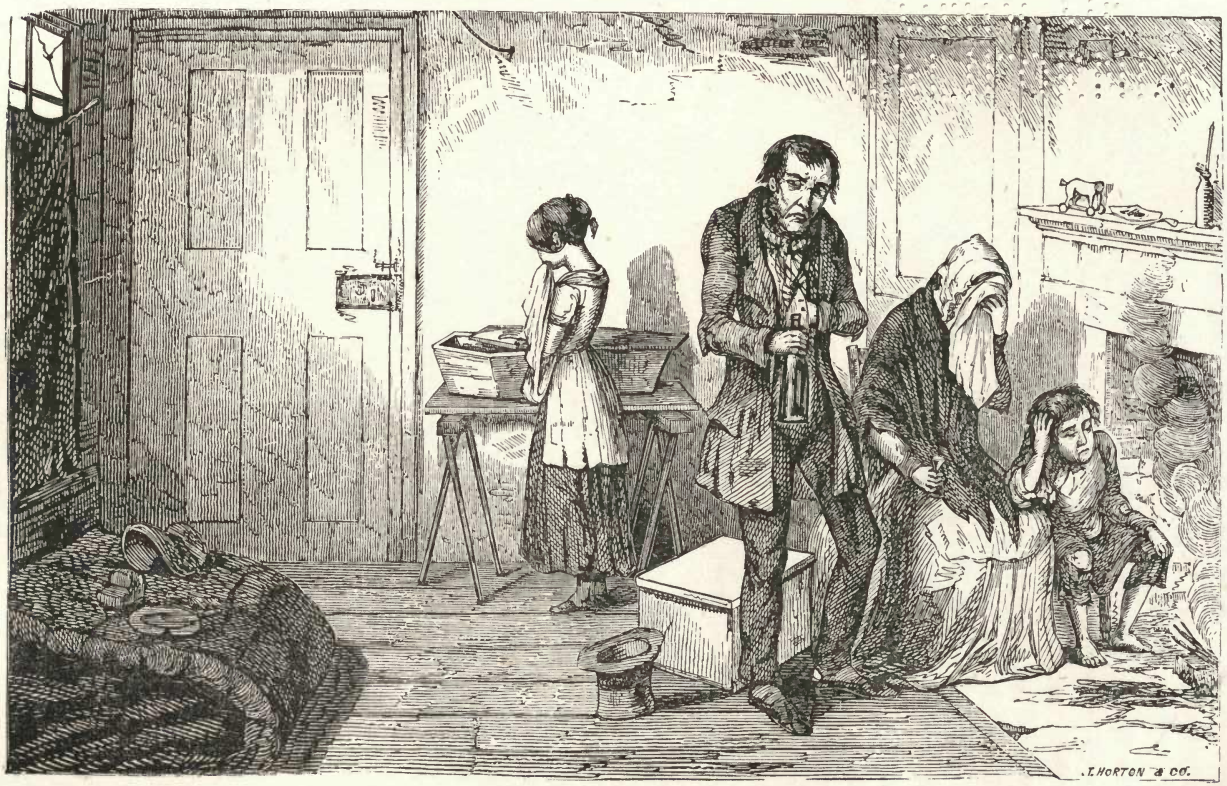
"Stop, I say!" And the brutal man took his feet down, and turned half round to give force to his words by a threatening look.

"Aint you going to hush up there?" As he said this, Latimer started up and went toward the grieving little one.

"Oh, father!" exclaimed Agnes, moving between him and the bed upon which Lotty lay,—"Do n't whip her. Indeed she 's very sick this morning. There, Lotty!" she added, in a soothing voice, turning toward her sister,—"there, dear, do n't cry."

The interference only made Latimer more angry. Seizing Agnes by the arm, he threw her with violence against the side of the room, cursing her bitterly as he did so; and then stooping over the shadowy form of the still fretting child, struck it two or three stunning blows. It ceased crying. He again took his seat by the fire-place, and turned his back upon his family.

Agnes went out weeping, to renew for another day, her miserable employment. But the low moan of little Lotty was in her ears, and she heard it, as she stole along the crowded streets, above the rattling of wheels and the discord of many voices. For the very sadness of her young face, many stopped and gave their pittance, who would otherwise have passed on.



COLD, MISERY, AND WANT DESTROY THEIR YOUNGEST CHILD, AND IN THEIR GRIEF THEY CONSOLE THEMSELVES WITH THE BOTTLE.

Page 285.

When Mrs. Latimer was ready to go out with Lotty, and went to take her up, she found her in a kind of stupor—merely asleep she thought. But it was the blessed prelude to a sweeter sleep than the little sufferer had ever known.

Wrapping up the light form and lifting it as if the weight were little more than the weight of so much down, the mother went forth again—but with a dying child in her arms. At one of the corners in the city, past which the onward passing crowd of men and women flowed in one continuous wave, she sat down, and exposed the death-stricken face of her youngest born. The mother's eyes were too dim to perceive the signs that were not mistaken by others.

"Take that child home, good woman! It is dying!" said one.

"That child is too sick to be exposed on a day like this," said another.

And words of similar import were repeated over and over again, but the mother saw nothing more than she had seen for weeks. Sometimes a little crowd would gather around her, attracted by the ghastly look of the unconscious one that lay in her arms, and many hearts being touched by the spectacle of misery, many hands tendered the alms she sought.

At last, the mother was aroused by the startling exclamation—

"Good Heaven! That child's dead!"

And it was too true. In the cold streets, its head against the colder bosom of its unnatural parent, the child had died. But its death was peaceful. From the midst of the restless, eager crowd, it had gone home. And it was better to die any where than to live. Up to the last moment of suffering our hearts go sadly with such a one, and we feel like weeping at every step; but when the heart ceases to beat, when the eye becomes dark, and the ear sealed forever to earthly sounds—then we breathe freely; our sadness is turned into a feeling of relief and thankfulness.

Well might the mother start at the strange words! Well might she shudder, when she looked down upon the image of clay that she held in her arms, and saw that it was but the effigy of her babe!

Starting up, with a low cry of horror and fear, Mrs. Latimer covered the face of the dead child with her shawl, and turned,

with hurried steps, homeward. The mother's heart was now reached, and it throbbed with anguish.—Trooping back upon her mind, came memories of neglect, wickedness and cruelty. She understood now, why the child had moaned all night, and why it had lain panting upon the breast of Agnes. The cruel blows from its father's hand, she felt upon her own heart. These were, perhaps, the bitterest moments of her whole life. As she went with rapid steps back to her house, her thoughts retraced, hurriedly, the last few years, until it came to the pleasant days she spent before the bottle entered, like a demon of evil, their happy home.—Lotty, with her bright eyes and waving curls, was before her, and she even heard, in memory, the gay laugh of the gladsome creature. Then a thick darkness seemed to shut down over her—and then she felt the dead form of Lotty in her arms.

All day Agnes was upon the street with her brother. Towards evening, she turned her steps homeward, tired, and with a troubled spirit. Hardly for a moment at a time had the image of her sick sister been out of her mind. James was crying with cold and fatigue, and as they walked along, he said that he wished he could die. Agnes made no answer to this; for she felt, young as she was, that it would be better to die than to live.

At last they reached home, with thirty-five cents, the result of their day's solicitations for charity. Thirty-five pennies! How many hundreds of cold repulses, harsh words and threats, had they endured in that weary day, before even so small a sum came into their hands! As Agnes entered, she went first to the bed on the floor, where she saw that Lotty had been laid, to look at and speak to the little sick one. Before her mother could prevent her, she had turned down the sheet that lay over the corpse, and the white face of Lotty was exposed to her eyes. She had never looked upon death before; but, no matter—she knew the ghastly signs too well; and with a bitter cry, let the sheet fall over the marble features, and sank in a passion of grief, upon the floor.

The father and mother were sitting by the fire. With them, the bitterness of the first shock of grief, was, for the time, over. They had consoled themselves with the bottle, and now felt much better. And ever and anon, during the evening of sorrow that followed, they took new draughts of consolation, until all was forgotten, and they fell asleep upon the floor.

A lonely watcher by the dead throughout that never-to-be-forgotten night, was the little girl who had loved the child so well. Of all she felt and thought, as the silent hours moved slowly away, no one but herself can know. Too far do such experiences come; but all who pass through them as young as she, receive impressions which nothing in after life can efface.

Day at last began to come dimly and coldly in, and then, with her head lying near that of the departed one, Agnes fell asleep and dreamed of the old and happy time. But her sleep was brief and her waking full of sorrow.

While the father and mother again sought consolation in the bottle, Agnes was sent to the houses of people in the neighborhood, to whom she related a sad tale of poverty, suffering and death. Some gave her grave clothes, some money with which to buy a coffin, others said they would call round and see if her story was true, and one man, to whom she applied, on ascertaining the facts in the case, bought a plain coffin at an undertaker's and had it sent home. Into this the dead body was placed, and on the morning that followed, it was buried at the public charge, in the "Potter's Field."

All through the night preceding the interment, Agnes again watched with the corpse, and watched alone. The bottle had locked up the souls and senses of her parents. With the morning light she again slept; but was soon aroused from sweet forgetfulness by the hand of her mother. The bottle was empty, and must be replenished. Hiding it under her apron, she descended to the street, and knowing that all the neighborhood were aware of her sister's death, she felt unwilling to go into any liquor-selling store near at hand, and so went off for two or three blocks. The drinking house she entered was that of Morrison, and the bottle she held in her hand was the same that had contained the tempting cordial given as a bait to her father. Morrison knew her.

"Well, what do you want?" he said gruffly, as she came up to the counter.

"I want a pint of gin."

"How much money have you?" asked the landlord. "Let me see."

Agnes handed him a two-shilling piece, and said she wanted change.

Morrison took the money, and stepping back to the door upon which sundry small accounts were kept, pointed to a group of chalk marks, and said—

"Go home, child, and tell your father that I have passed the money to his account."

"Yes sir," said Agnes, not comprehending what he meant; and she remained standing by the counter.

"There, run home." And Morrison nodded his head towards the door.

"But you have n't given me the gin," said Agnes.

"No, nor do n't mean to give it to you. Run away home and tell your father that I have kept the money in part payment for what he owes me."

Agnes understood this perfectly, and seeing by the expression of the man's face, that remonstrance was hopeless, took up her bottle and went away.

When she told her mishap at home, even the presence of the dead child could not repress the sudden anger of the father; but he happened to be sober, and the few better feelings that remained in his bosom, arose, and soon controlled him. More money was given to Agnes, and this time she had better success. The bottle was replenished, and the parents sought in that the consolation it were vain to look for in their own thoughts.

At ten o'clock the dead cart came; and they looked their last look upon the face of Lotty. A rough man entered, screwed on the coffin lid, and bore the body carelessly away. Agnes felt as if she would suffocate with the struggling anguish pent up in her young breast, and little Jimmy wept as if his heart were breaking; but the parents consoled themselves with the bottle.

CHAPTER VI.

Latimer and his wife had sowed the wind, and were now reaping, indeed, the whirlwind. They had tarried long at the wine, and it was biting like an adder. Strong drink had burnt out from their hearts all the affection that once glowed there. The death of Lotty, whom both had neglected and abused, made a

wider space between them. They disagreed oftener; used harsher words to each other and the children; and when more excited by drink than usual, Latimer would sometimes threaten his wife with blows.

Months passed, and Agnes and her brother, who lived upon the street, began to change for the worse. Idleness, the daily practice of falsehood in order to excite pity, and exposure to vicious company, all tended to deprave them. They were open to a thousand temptations abroad, and had no promptings to good at home. It is no matter of surprise, therefore, that so soon as they became familiar with the new life they were leading, they began to feel the allurements of vice, and to yield to them, a little and a little at a time. The profane language used by boys and girls of her own age, which so shocked the ears of Agnes when she went upon the streets to beg had lost its strangeness, and she could even utter expressions at which, when first heard, her young heart shuddered. Not only had profane language ceased to hurt her moral sense, but she could listen to immodest words with more of pleasure than pain. James also was proving an apt scholar in the school of vice. Not alone by begging did they obtain that for which the idle and besotted parents had sent them forth. They scrupled not to purloin any article upon which they could place their hands, if it could be done without too great an exposure to the danger of detection. In this way, they often obtained much more than they did by begging.

To the vice of stealing, the children were first driven by punishment for not being more successful in their begging expeditions. The small pittance sometimes brought home at night, called down upon them the charge of spending a portion of what they had received, and first put the thoughts of doing so into their heads. After that, they were tempted to spend pennies and the sixpences, for their own gratification; the consequences were that their returns at the close of the day became less and less. Punishment followed; although both the children earnestly denied the truth that was charged upon them.

After this, the tempter suggested the crime of petty theft, and they hearkened to his words. Much more frequently now than before did they enter private houses to beg. The cold victuals generally received were thrown into the street as soon as they were away from the premises of those who gave them. Occa-

sionally, they would find an area door open, and get into a house without the trouble of knocking or ringing; and occasionally, after thus gaining an admittance, they would find the servant out of the way, and be able to get possession of a spoon or some other small article of no great value, and retire unperceived. Sometimes, while the lady of the house, or one of her domestics, turned away to get something for them to eat, they would seize the opportunity to get an article of trifling value into their hands and conceal it, which would not be missed, perhaps, until hours after they were gone; it might be not for days. These they generally sold at certain shops, the owners of which were ever ready to buy articles from children at one half or one-third their value. But, sometimes their booty was taken home, and then they said they had found it.

One evening, Agnes brought home a pair of sugar-tongs, which she had stolen.

"Why, child!" said her mother, in surprise, "where did you get these from?" She was less under the influence of liquor than usual.

"I found them," replied Agnes.

"What's that? Let me see," spoke up Latimer, his eyes sparkling at the sight of the silver; and he reached out his hand to get the tongs, but his wife kept them out of his reach.

"Why don't you give them to me?" he said, angrily; and he caught hold of his wife's arm, and after struggling with her for some moments, succeeded in wrenching the article from her hand.

"You're a brute!" exclaimed Mrs. Latimer, her face flushed, and her eyes lit up with a fierce expression.

"Don't say that again!" retorted Latimer, in a menacing tone, while his thin lips parted from over his teeth.

His wife muttered something in an under tone, and then turning to Agnes, who was little moved by the strife that had arisen between her father and mother—she had witnessed such things too often—said,

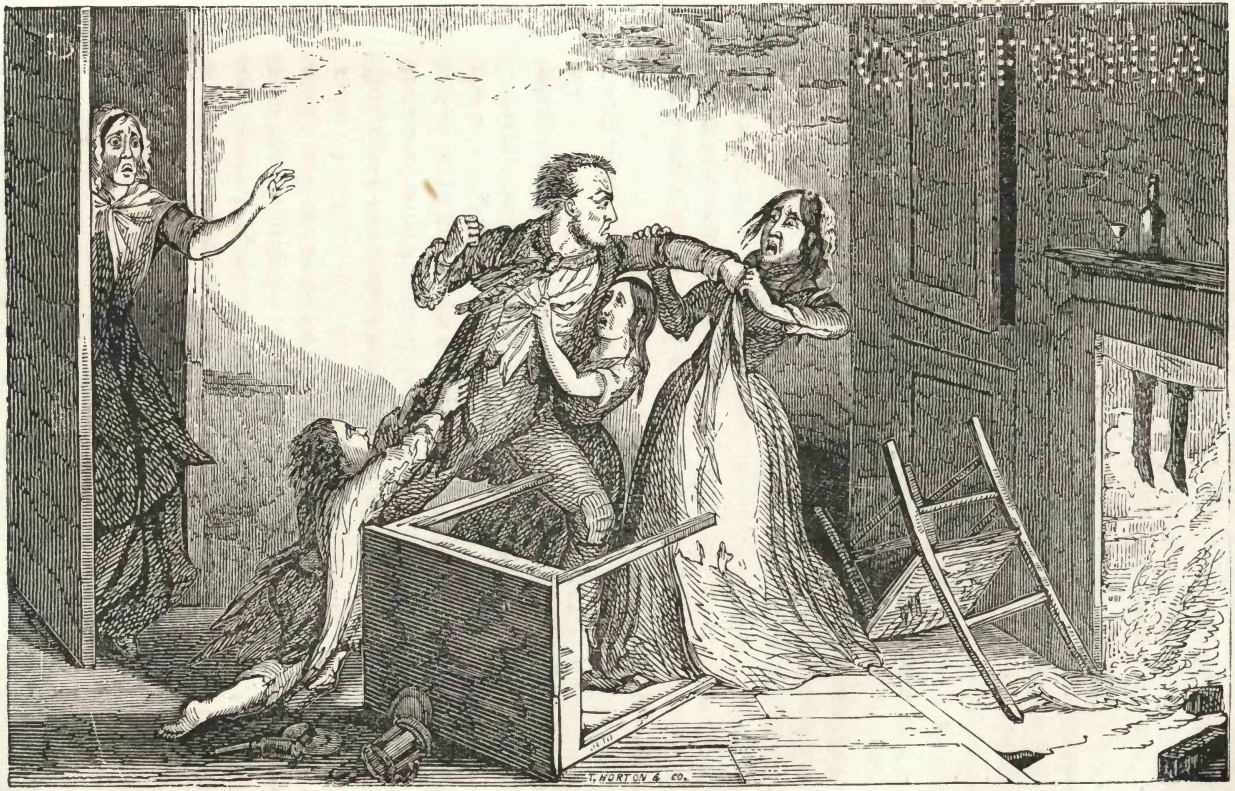
"Found them, did you say?"

"Yes; I found 'em away up in Madison-street."

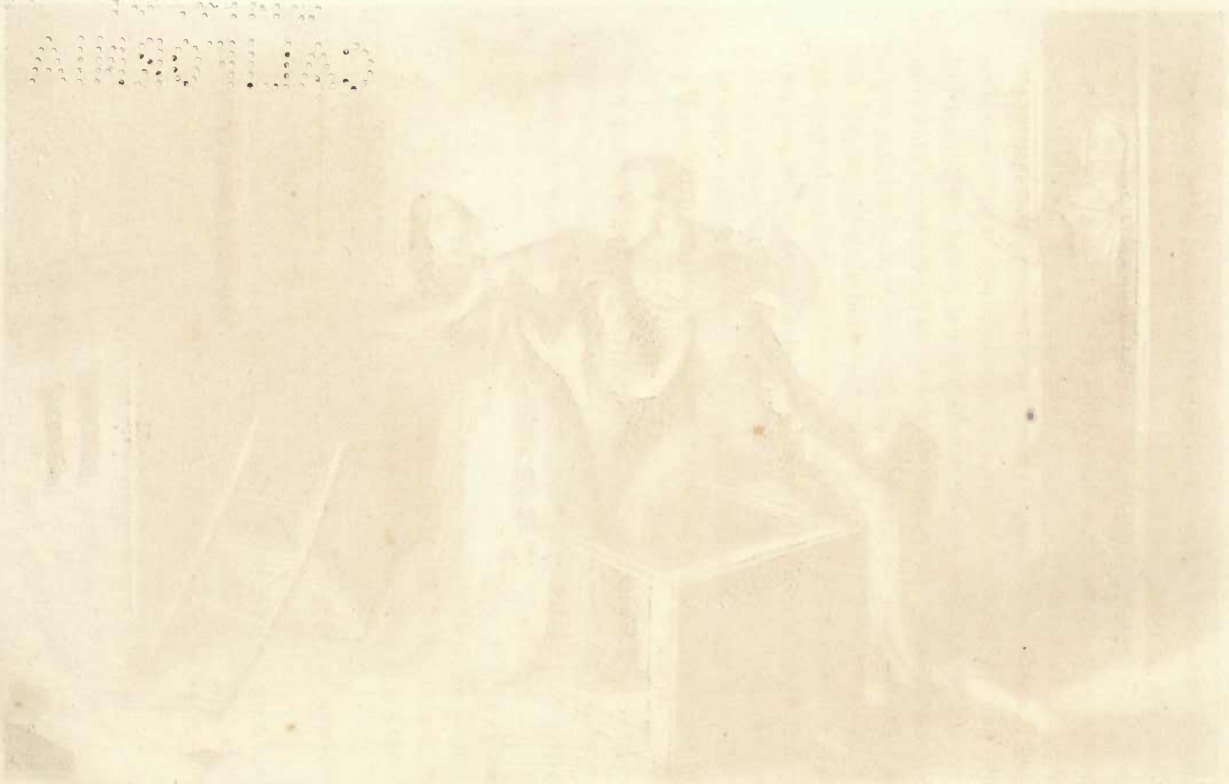
"On the pavement?"

"Yes—no ma'am."

"Yes—no ma'am"— repeated Mrs. Latimer, mimicking the voice of Agnes. Then, in a loud and angry tone, she said—



QUARRELS BETWEEN MR. AND MRS. LATIMER, AND BRUTAL VIOLENCE BETWEEN THEM, WERE THE NATURAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE TOO FREQUENT USE OF THE BOTTLE.—*Page* 290.



"You lie, you little huzzy! you never found them tongs. You stole them!"

Agnes, to enforce her protestation of innocence, added a plentiful effusion of tears.

"If you found them, then, tell me where you found them?" said the mother, taking fiercely hold of the arm of Agnes, and jerking her around.

"I found them—I found them," sobbed Agnes, "just by the back gate of a house up in Pearl—no, Madison-street—where they had been shaken out of a table-cloth. I saw the girl come out, and shake the cloth, and when I went up to the place, I saw the sugar-tongs on the ground."

"It 's a lie, you little thief! you stole them; and I should n't wonder if you were in the House of Refuge before to-morrow night. And then see what trouble you would bring upon us, you good-for-nothing huzzy!"

"How do you know she stole them?" asked Latimer, who still held the sugar-tongs in his hand, and had calculated their value to a sixpence.

"Because I know she did. Nobody is going to shake a pair of sugar-tongs into the street."

"No, you do n't know any such thing! Look here, girl—Agnes! come here. Now tell me the truth. Did you find these tongs?"

"Yes, sir, I did," replied Agnes, firmly.

"I know you did," said Latimer.

"It 's a lie! she did n't," retorted Mrs. Latimer. "She stole them."

"See here, woman!" and Latimer again showed his teeth in a manner that betokened no good—"Just see here! now take my advice, and do n't call my child a thief again, for I won't stand it—I won't!"

"I wonder what you 'll do!" replied Mrs. Latimer, who understood the threat.

"I 'll knock your head off of you, that 's what I 'll do."

"Oh yes! I 've heard that threat before. But, you 're like some dogs, your bark is worse than your bite."

"Shut up!"

Mrs. Latimer turned away with an air of contempt, and resumed her attack upon Agnes.

"You lying little huzzy, you!" she said. "Now tell me the truth, or I'll limb you."

"Indeed, indeed, mother! I found them!" answered Agnes.

"It 's a lie! you did n't; you stole them, you little thief, you!"

Latimer was drunk enough to think and care little about consequences. At these words, he started up, and, swearing furiously, made towards his wife. Seizing her by the throat, he drew back his arm, and with his clenched fist struck her several severe blows, while she screamed in terror, and struggled to free herself from his vice-like grasp.

A scene like this, the frightened children had never before witnessed in their home of misery. Agnes joined her cries with those of her mother, and opposed her feeble strength against her father, in the vain effort to bear him back; while the little boy caught hold of him on the other side, and screaming in terror, struggled to drag the strong man away. The few articles of furniture in the room were thrown about the floor, adding to the noise and wild excitement of the dreadful scene. Not until other occupants of the house came rushing in, did the infuriated man cease to rain down his heavy blows upon the shrinking body of his almost senseless wife. As he released his grasp, she fell, with a long wailing cry, upon the floor.

One of those who entered the room, or rather only came to the door, seeing what was passing within, rushed down stairs and into the street. There was a police office close by, and an officer, to whom this individual gave information of what was occurring, repaired to the house, and arrested Latimer while he was yet raving and swearing like a demon. In the hands of an officer, he became instantly as submissive as a child. The wife and children now sued with tears for his release, but their entreaties had no effect. Latimer was taken off and committed to answer for his conduct. In the morning, his case had a hearing, and he was placed in confinement for a month. Here he was visited by his wife, as often as she could get admission; and she managed, at each time, to bring in unobserved by the keepers, a small quantity of liquor.

On the very day of Latimer's release from confinement, he became furious from intoxication, and beat his wife so badly that she was not able to go out for a week. Fearful quarrels and brutal violence were now of almost daily occurrence. The debased hus-

band, and equally debased wife, rarely spoke to each other, except in a way to provoke retort, and lead, perchance, to blows.

Home had, now, so little to attract and so much to repulse the children, that they kept away from it as long as possible when they went out, and several times remained away all night—enticed into dens of infamy and crime, to be plundered of the small gains of their day's efforts at begging and stealing, while they slept. The cause of their absence was never truly stated. But it mattered not, so far as the consequences visited upon them by their parents were concerned. They were cruelly beaten each time they staid from home all night. At last, so intolerable became the condition of Agnes and her brother, that they determined, after having suffered most dreadful beatings from their drunken parents, that they would not return to them any more. An old wretch, who sold rum, and permitted persons of the worst character to harbor on her premises, encouraged them in this, and for so much a night, gave them a place upon the floor, where they might sleep, and an old quilt to cover them. They had no better accommodations at home; and were more comfortable, in at least one respect, for they were freed from the abuse of their parents, and from the hearing and sight of their fearful quarrels. But they saw and heard things in this den that their eyes should not have seen, nor their ears heard.

It took a week for Latimer and his wife to discover the fugitives, when they were taken home and punished.

CHAPTER VII.

Gladly would we throw down our pen at this point, and trace no further the dreadful history we have undertaken to write. But the whole fearful truth has not yet been told; and as a warning to all, we must not shrink from the task of telling it.

Latimer and his family have been for some time, and still are, mere cumberers of the ground. They engage in no useful employments even for the means of supplying the bottle, the sad instrument of all their woes. By false representations of misery —heaven knows the reality needs no exaggeration—they con-

tinued to extort from the compassionate, or from those who give their penny to get rid of the beggar, enough from common charity to keep the fiery stream of ruin full to its herbless banks. So it is, and so it will continue to the end.

It was in vain that men, who saw the rapid strides taken by Latimer in his downward course to destruction, came forward, and sought in every way to rescue him from the hands of the demon vice that had, in a few short years, so horribly changed and debased him. But he railed at them when they spoke of reform; and bitterly cursed them if they urged him to stop where he was, and retrace his steps. During the day, he prowled about the streets, or sat moping and stupefied with liquor in low groggeries; and at night, generally came home too much intoxicated to do a great deal of harm in the drunken broils between him and his wife, that always marked his return.

A long time had passed since his summary ejection from the premises of Morrison; and ever since, he had kept away from the "Man and Monkey." But, about this time, in a half drunken state, he took it into his head to visit the "respectable" tavern of the veteran mixer of slings and toddies. So he dropped in upon him late in the afternoon, when there was a goodly number of customers in the bar-room, and marching up to where he stood behind his counter, addressed in a familiar, yet not very flattering manner—

"Hallo, old chap! How're you coming on, my hearty? If brandy isn't riz since I was here last, hand us over a horn."

"Tom," said Morrison to a bar-keeper, "put that fellow out."

"Oh no, you don't!" replied Latimer, as the man came forward, and he continued to back away from him, putting his thumb to his nose in a sneering and defiant manner, until he had reached the extreme part of the room, where he sat down on a kind of locker that ran along against the wall. The bar-keeper laid hold of him, but as he did so, Latimer slid from his hand, and lay at full length upon the floor. Angry at being thus foiled, the bar-keeper seized him by the feet, and was dragging him away, when three or four of those present ordered him to desist, or they would pitch him into the street. As the hint was given in earnest, and so understood, it needed no repetition. Tom went behind the bar again, and old Morrison, fuming like a beer

barrel, came out into the middle of the room, swearing that the "loafing vagabond" should go out of his house.

"What has he done?" inquired several voices.

"No matter what he has done, he must go out," said the landlord, positively. "So here, my good fellow," addressing Latimer, "march off with you before I send for the police."

"That won't do no good, old chap," retorted Latimer. "I have n't done any thing, and here are my witnesses," glancing round at the bar-room audience.

He now got up from the floor, and staggered back upon the locker. He was a pitiable looking object; ragged, dirty, unshaven, and nothing upon his stockingless feet but a pair of slippers that scarcely retained their places.

"The landlord, here, seems to have a grudge against you," said one of the company that had gathered about the wretched creature. "What 's the matter?"

"Nothing," replied Latimer, "only he 's ashamed of his work, I suppose."

"Ah, that 's it! Well, landlord, what do you say? Do you own the soft impeachment?"

"Gentlemen," said Morrison with dignity, "I won't be insulted in my own house."

A loud laugh from those around showed how much his words and manner had impressed his audience.

"You do n't look like a very creditable job, certainly," remarked one of those present, looking with an eye of commiseration upon Latimer.

"But I was as well dressed as you, sir," replied the drunkard, arousing himself up, as some thoughts of former times came back upon him; "and had money laid up in the Savings Bank, when the landlord here first took me in hand. He has made me what you see. I was as sober a man as was to be found in a hundred miles round, when I was sent here to do a little job of work, and this respectable, good citizen enticed me with his drinks, and gave me a bottle of his cordial to take home. Many and many is the time since then that he has filled that bottle with brandy; but this was while my money lasted. After that was gone, I was a drunken, loafing vagabond, and must be kicked out if I showed myself on his respectable premises."

"That 's a hard story, landlord!" remarked one of the company.

"It's an infernal lie!" replied Morrison. "When a miserable, besotted loafing wretch like him debases and degrades himself with drink, he turns and charges it all upon the tavern-keeper. Gentlemen! This is my house, and I wish him to go out of it, and that instantly."

"Give him a glass of brandy, and I'll guarantee his submission to your will," spoke up, in a light manner, a person present.

"Hurrah! first rate! Come, landlord! try him with a strong brandy punch," chimed in another.

"Yes, try me," said the debased creature, who was the subject of all this excitement.

"Go to the devil!" retorted Morrison.

"He'll get there soon enough without any more aid from you," muttered one present, who had reason to believe Latimer's story; for he remembered very well the incident of the bottle. He it was to whom Morrison had expressed himself so freely on the occasion referred to.

The pleasure manifested by the poor wretch when the proposition to treat him was made, led one or two of those in the bar, "just for the fun of it," to call for brandy, and invite him to drink with them. He did not hesitate a moment about accepting the invitation; but stepped forward to the bar, and helped himself to nearly half a pint of the liquor set out for him.

"That's nothing for you, I suppose," said one of the criminally thoughtless young men who were indulging in this "fine sport."

"Is that what you call a horn?" said another; and, "Try another glass; it has no more strength than so much water," said a third.

In a matter like this, Latimer required no urging. He acted upon the light word as if spoken in earnest, and poured another tumbler full of the liquid poison down his throat.

"Come, try another," urged one of the party, thinking it rare sport; but now several of those present interfered, and said that Latimer had drunk enough, and had better take himself off home. In this the majority of the company agreed, and he was led to the door, and pushed out gently into the street. But, even though this was done gently, he staggered away from the "Man and Monkey," and was only prevented from falling into the gutter by the hand of a passenger that was extended in kindness to save him.

LATIMER, IN A STATE OF FURIOUS DRUNKENNESS, KILLS HIS WIFE WITH A BOTTLE, THE INSTRUMENT OF ALL THEIR MISERIES.—*Page* 297.

Tottering along, with little more command of his limbs than is possessed by the infant trying its few first steps alone, Latimer slowly worked his way homeward—now recovering himself, as his body leaned over the curb-stone, and now striking against the side of a house, and standing there for a few moments until he could steady his steps. He did not succeed, however, in his design of going directly home, for the pint of brandy, added to the gin and whiskey he had taken previously, proved too much for him. It required a sleep of two hours, under a cellar door, to restore him to a walking condition, and then he got up and went swaggering away.

When Latimer got home, some time after dark, he found that Agnes and James were still away, although he had positively told them that they must not remain out after night any more.

Vowing, with an oath, what he would do when they came in, he sat down and lighted his pipe. The mother ventured a word of excuse for the children, when he turned upon her like a madman, and declared, if she interfered with him, he would knock her brains out. As he said this, the feet and voices of Agnes and James were heard upon the stairs, and he got up and prepared himself to receive them. Agnes entered first, and her reception was a violent blow from the open hand of her father, which staggered her across the room. James was just behind her, but before the hand of the insane man could be lifted to strike him, the mother stepped between, and dashing both hands, with all her strength, suddenly against the breast of her husband, threw him so far back that he lost his balance, and fell heavily upon the floor.

Yelling like a madman, as he was, Latimer arose from the floor, and caught at the first object which presented itself to his eyes. That object was the accursed instrument of all their misery, *the Bottle*. Seizing it in his blind rage, he struck at his wife with the fury of a demon — for he was possessed by a demon, and a demon nerved his arm with unusual power. It was a fitting instrument that he used, in this awful work. The bottle crashed against the head of his wife, and then fell in fragments upon the floor. For an instant, Mrs. Latimer stood, with lifted hands, a wild expression of fear and pain upon her countenance, and then fell heavily, and with a deep groan, while the blood gushed over her face from a frightful wound.

Agnes ran screaming from the room, startling the inmates of the house, and those who happened to be passing at the time, by her fearful cries. A crowd rushed in; but they came only in time to witness the few last dying throes of the murdered woman.

He who had done this stood looking on, with a wild, horror-stricken countenance—now a madman indeed! He was soon in the hands of an officer, and borne struggling and yelling away. For him, as well as for his wife, the bottle had done its work, and it might well lie in broken fragments upon the floor of that room into which it had brought misery, desolation of heart, and crime.

CHAPTER VIII.

Would that with the murder of one and the madness of another, the evil work of the bottle had ceased—that with its destruction its dread influence had come to an end. But, alas! it was not so. The grave and the madhouse received two victims; but their children yet lived, now homeless, friendless, and depraved.

When the mother's body was taken away in the dead cart, Agnes and her little brother went forth into the city, whose evil but strongly pulsating heart, pours its corrupting current through a thousand veins that are hidden from the public gaze, to sink deeper in vice and crime. There was no one to speak to them a word of good advice; no one to care whether they did wrong or right. The means of subsistence were in their own hands, and they went on for a time, in their old vocation. Their resting place at night was upon a bundle of rags, or upon the hard floor, in some abode of vice, where their minds acquired a maturity in evil, that would have shamed their elders by many years. For a long time, growing worse and worse, sinking lower and lower, they went on, until they attracted the eyes of the Police, and were taken up and sent to the House of Refuge, where they remained for many years.

At the age of fifteen, Agnes was taken from the institution by a family some fifty miles from the city, who used every means in

their power to make her useful and respectable; but the seeds of vice had been, alas! too thickly sown, and had felt, too intensely, the influx of infernal light and heat. They had already begun to germinate. In less than a year, she ran off and made her way back to the city, where, by a change of name she succeeded in successfully eluding the efforts of the Police for her arrest as a fugitive from the Refuge, and soon become more vile and wicked than she had ever been.

James, before he was apprenticed, heard that Agnes had left her place. Rightly conjecturing that she had gone back to their old haunts, and eager to join her, he waited only until his turn came to be put out, to do as she had done.

Seven years had passed since the lad walked the streets of that great city. Then he was but a child, now he was a stout boy. Until he found himself alone, and without money in his pocket in the heart of a now strange place, he had scarcely asked himself what he would do, or what his real purpose was in throwing himself upon its troubled and dangerous waters. As he passed along, old localities brought back to his mind the thoughts of former times, and of some incidents that he would rather have forgotten than remembered; and, hardened as he was, and full of impulses to wrong, he felt that there was misery in evil courses, and he more than half repented the unwise step he had taken, in running away from a comfortable and virtuous home.

While passing, thus, slowly and thoughtfully along, he met a gaily dressed young girl, and before he recognized her changed face and appearance, was startled by her familiar voice and the words—

"Why, Jimmy! What are you doing here?"

It was Agnes. But, in her gay attire, and more womanly appearance, the sister of the lad no longer appeared. It was Agnes; and yet not to him the Agnes of old—the sister he had loved for her tenderness to him in the sad and evil days of their unhappy childhood. He took her hand, and grasped it tightly—but it did not feel like the hand of his sister.

Agnes saw what he felt, and comprehended all that was in his mind; and the regrets of that moment were the most painful she had ever felt since her wide and almost hopeless departure from virtue.

Had it been otherwise with her than it was, she might have

again united her fortunes with those of her brother, and in the bond of fraternal affection helped each other to do right and be happy. But this was hopeless now—and bitterly did she feel that it was so.

For hours they walked the streets together, and talked of the past, and made some, but few allusions to the future. When James asked his sister where she lived, she refused to tell him.

"It is better that you should not know," she said, and her voice was sad as she spoke. He understood her, and depraved as his own heart was, it felt cold and shuddered.

On making enquiry about their father, James learned that he still lived, and was still an inmate of the mad house. He proposed that they should visit him. Agnes at first declined, but when she found that he meant to go, she changed her mind and accompanied him.

They found an old man, shivering by the fire, and shrinking as from some object of horror. There was little about him that reminded them of their father. They did not linger long to look upon an object so painful to behold. When they left his gloomy cell, there was no emotions of affection in their hearts; but a bitter remembrance of that never-to-be-forgotten night when his hand imbrued itself in their mother's blood.

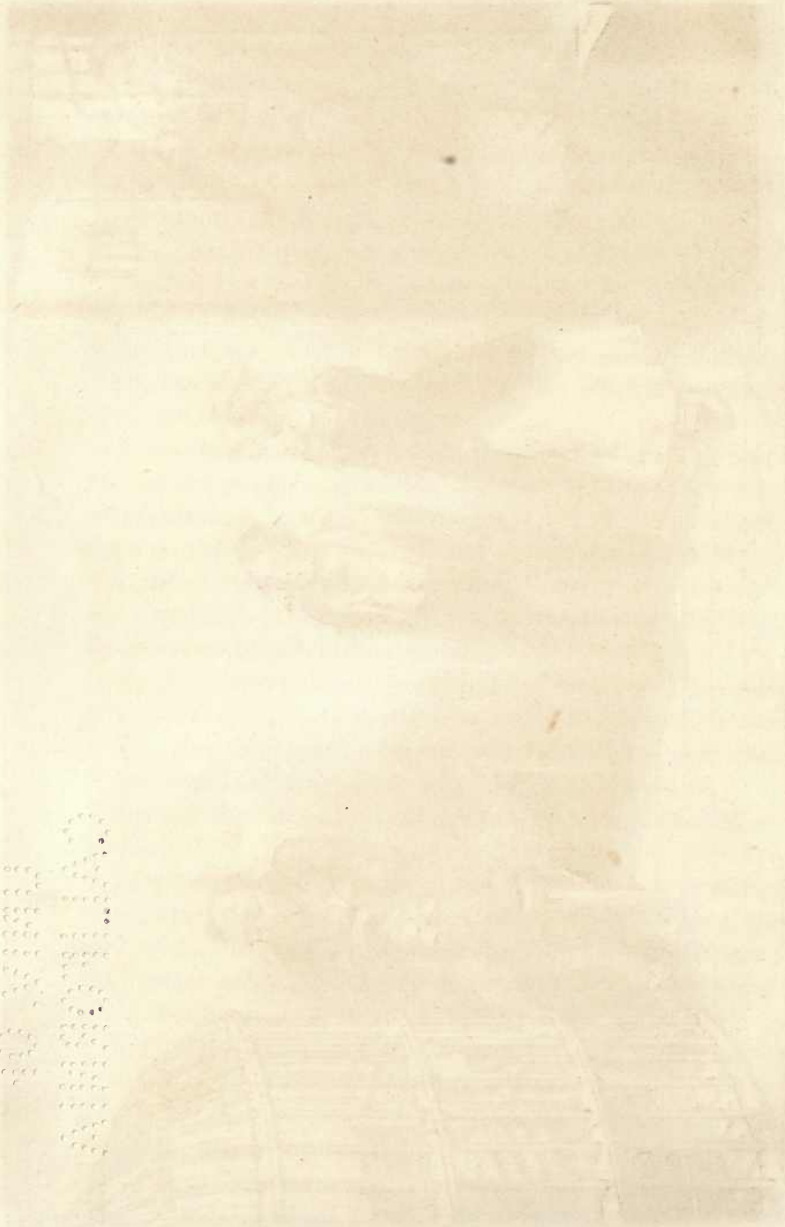
As they turned from the cell, they saw, crouching upon the ground beneath a grated window, an old man, with terror-staring eyes. The lad paused a moment to look at him, and then said to the keeper,—

"Is n't that old Morrison who sold rum at the 'Man and Monkey?'"

The keeper nodded assent, and they passed on. It was nearly night when they parted. Agnes gave her brother some money, and promised to see him at a certain place on the next day; but they never met again. A horrible murder was committed that night in a house of ill-repute, and Agnes was the victim!

Verily, the bottle had done its work!

THE BOTTLE HAS DONE ITS WORK WITH THE LATIMERS; IT HAS DESTROYED THE INFANT AND ITS MOTHER; IT HAS BROUGHT THE SON AND DAUGHTER TO THE STREET, AND HAS LEFT THE FATHER A HOPELESS MANIAC.—*Page* 300.



CHAPTER IX.

After parting with his sister, James Latimer walked the streets for an hour, and then sought lodgings in a low tavern. The interview with Agnes, and the visit to his wretched father, sobered his feelings; and when, that night, he sat alone in the small chamber to which he had been assigned, his reflections were sad and painful. Depraved as he was, a thought of the still lower deep into which the sister whose love for, and care over him during a part of his wretched childhood, had become, as year after year went by, a dearer and dearer remembrance, disturbed him deeply, and he strove, but in vain, to drive the thought from his mind. It haunted him like a spectre, and made a low shudder, at times, go thrilling to his heart.

During the night he had troubled dreams. He saw Agnes in peril, but had no power to save her. He awoke, twice, with her fearful cries ringing in his ears; and slept again, to dream of kindred horrors. Then came, too, in that night of dreaming misery, the wild, horror-stricken face of his father, and he could not turn from the blasting sight.

The blessed day at last came; and when James Latimer met at table the few boarders who congregated in that low haunt of vice where he had taken up a temporary abode, they spoke of a horrible murder that had been committed during the night upon the body of an unfortunate girl. But it did not once occur to him that the victim was Agnes; for they spoke of the girl by name, and it was not that of his sister.

After breakfast James went out to meet Agnes according to appointment. But although he remained in the neighborhood where she had promised to see him, for two hours after the time at which she had agreed to be there, she did not make her appearance, and James wandered off to other parts of the city, with an oppressive weight upon his feelings. Two or three times during the day, he came back to the place where they had agreed to meet; but she was not there. Night came without his again seeing her, when he returned for lodgings to the tavern where he had spent his first night in the city after an absence of many years. Again the conversation among the boarders turned

upon the murder that had been committed; still it did not occur to James that the wretched victim might be no other than his fallen sister, until one of those present happened to say that of course the name by which she was known was not her real one. Then the fear came thrilling upon the heart of James, that the murdered girl might be Agnes.

"Did you see her?" he asked, in a voice that was calm only as the result of an effort, speaking to one who seemed to know more about the affair than the rest.

"Yes," he replied. "I was at the house to-day."

"Was she very young;" inquired James.

"Yes; quite a young thing."

"What kind of eyes and hair?"

"Very dark."

"Is she buried yet?" asked James, evincing some agitation, and rising up as he spoke.

"No; I believe not."

"Where is the house?"

The man gave him minute directions, and James started off with a trembling heart. One glance at the mangled body sufficed to tell him the dreadful truth. He looked at it but for a moment, and then, with a feeling of horror, turned away. And even as he did so, while yet the terrible object he had looked upon was distinctly before his eyes, the feeling he could not utter in words, nor even let form to itself a thought, accorded with this sentiment—"It is better for her to die than to live as she was living."

From the house where his murdered sister lay, James went back, with a sad heart, to his lodging place. He had three shillings in his pocket, the balance that remained of the small sum of money given him by Agnes. After that was gone, he knew not from whence the means of living were to come. To none of the rough occupants of the boarding house he had selected, did he mention the dreadful truth he had discovered, though some who noticed him more closely than the rest, saw that something painful was on his mind. He passed another unhappy and almost sleepless night, and appeared, on the next morning, evidently exceedingly disturbed in mind.

"What are you going to do with yourself, my lad?" said one of the boarders to James, as he walked out into the street with him after breakfast.

"Drown myself, I believe," replied James, moodily.

"That's a poor kind of business, in my opinion," returned the man, "and does n't pay. Are you out of money?"

"Yes."

"Have you friends in the city?"

"No."

"Are you willing to do anything?"

"Yes; if I can get anything to do. I do n't want to starve."

"Well, my lad," returned the man; "I am going to open a public house to-morrow, and want a smart chap to help me at the bar. Will you come?"

"Of course I will. But what will you give me?"

"Two dollars a week and find you."

"That 'll do, I guess."

"Very well. To-morrow we 'll begin."

And on the morrow they did begin, by opening a new avenue through which men could go, body and soul, to destruction.

The new drinking house soon had its customers of all grades, and James soon began to feel perfectly at home in the pestilent atmosphere he was breathing. But, when the bustle and excitement of the day were over, and he was alone with himself again, thoughts of his murdered sister and mad father, and a remembrance of the cause which led to such horrible consequences, oppressed and disturbed him; and there were times when he wished himself back again in the quiet home he had left far off in the country. But, daily familiarity with vicious company, and the daily habit of drinking what he wanted at the bar, soon began to bear him down to a lower depth than any into which he had yet descended, and to render his feelings and perceptions still more obtuse. He had entered a school of vice, and was proving himself an apt scholar.

It is not our intention to trace, step by step, the progress which James Latimer made in the downward road. That would take up too much time, and not at all aid in the purpose we have in view. We have seen his entrance, and we know, too well, to what depth of degradation and misery the way leads.

In a year the lad had changed sadly for the worse. He had learned to drink to intoxication, and associate with persons of the vilest character. His father, who had been ruined by the bottle, entered the broad road to destruction late in life, as com-

pared with his age. What hope was there, then, for the son? It was but as a feeble, glimmering light. During the first year of his downward course, James continued to serve customers at the bar of the man who had opened the new drinking house; but he had become so debased, kept such vile company, and was so quarrelsome in his temper, that even this drunkard-maker was compelled to threaten him with a discharge from his employment, if he did not mend both his habits and his manners.

Before the second year had rolled round, this threat was put into execution, and James Latimer was again adrift. For a few months he loitered about the city, harboring in dens of infamy, and consorting with wretches of the vilest and most degraded character. Sometimes he had food, and sometimes went for days with scarcely enough to sustain nature. Amid all, he managed to get liquor, and was for more than half of his time, in a state of partial or complete intoxication. One so young and so fallen, could get no employment. His very appearance caused all to whom, in more lucid moments, he applied, to turn from him with a quick denial. He was an outcast; and there were times when he felt this bitterly. But, even if a feeble desire to reform, arose sometimes, there was no friend at his side to fan the little spark into a flame; no one to take him by the hand and lift him gently upon his feet, and hold him there until he had power to stand alone.

One morning he crawled out of a miserable hovel, where, for a few pennies he had procured a night's shelter, and was moving aimlessly along the street, when a voice called out,

"Hallo, Jim! Isn't your name Latimer?"

He looked across the street, and replied to a staggering crony who had thus hailed him—

"I d' no. B'lieve it is."

"Well, if it is, somebody advertises this morning that he wants to see you on some very particular business. I saw it in the Sun."

"Wants to see me?"

"Yes, if your name is James Latimer."

"What does he want to see me, for?"

"Does n't say. But you 'll see it in the Sun, if you 'll get one."

A Sun was bought from a newsboy who was passing, and there

James read an advertisement, earnestly desiring him, if in the city, to call at a certain number in a certain street, where a person wished to see him on a subject that particularly interested him.

"I guess they don't catch this lark in that way," said James, after reading the advertisement.

"Aint you going?" said his companion.

"No, indeed. If any body wants me, let him find me."

"What 's the matter? Afraid of the police?"

"No. But it 's very strange that any body should want to see me. 'Taint for no good. Let 'em catch me, if they can. But I aint green enough to put my head in any of their traps."

This was young Latimer's first decision. He thought of the House of Refuge, and of the master from whom he had run away; and did not in the least doubt, but that this was a movement to get him back.

Still he read the advertisement over and over again, and referred to it a dozen times in an hour. After all, it might not be a plan to catch him and take him back to the country or the Refuge. This thought came next. He studied over it, and changed his view of the matter a dozen times, and, finally, determined that he would go and see who it was that wanted him.

The house bearing the number stated in the advertisement, was occupied by a hatter. James passed and repassed it almost twenty times before he ventured to go in. Behind the counter he saw, at work, a middle-aged man, with a benevolent, prepossessing countenance. Several times the man looked at him as he went by, and, he thought, fixed his eyes somewhat intently upon him. At last he ventured in, and said—

"Did you advertise——"

"For James Latimer," quickly spoke up the man. "Is that your name?"

"Yes sir."

"Poor young man!" said the hatter in a voice of sympathy. "You have indeed fallen low."

There was so much of kindness and real sympathy in the tone of voice with which this was uttered, that James was affected by it.

"It is too true, sir. I am low and miserable enough. Heaven help me!"

"And Heaven alone can help you, my young friend," replied the man earnestly. "But I will tell you at once what I want with you; for no time is to be lost. Your father has been very ill, and has suddenly recovered his reason. He wants to see you and your sister before he dies. You both called to see him, he has learned since he became lucid, nearly two years ago, and he supposed one or both of you might still be in the city. Where is your sister?" James leaned against the counter to support himself. He felt his knees tremble.

"Dead," he replied huskily.

"Ah! How long since?"

"She was murdered on the very night after we called at the hospital."

The man lifted his hands in painful surprise.

"This we had better conceal from your father; the shock may be too great for him," he said. And then added—"But we must get into the stage and go out immediately. His life is hanging on a thread. He was alive I ascertained this morning."

The man came from behind his counter, put on his coat and hat, and started off in company with the miserable looking creature who had answered his advertisement. Young Latimer's clothes were worn and dirty, and his whole appearance of a most disgusting character. His face showed the marks of evil courses as strongly as did his garments.

On their way to the hospital, but little passed between the young man and the benevolent individual who had him in charge. When they arrived at the hospital, they learned that old Mr. Latimer was still alive, though sinking rapidly. Without any delay they were ushered into his presence. He was lying upon a bed, supported by pillows, and the hospital physician and nurse were standing near him. As James entered, his father raised himself up and looked at him for a moment intently; then sinking back, he shut his eyes and groaned aloud. The son understood the meaning of this expression of pain; and the groan of his father was like the entrance of an arrow into his heart.

Old Mr. Latimer soon recovered himself, and, as his son, who was almost forced to the bedside by the person who had accompanied him to the hospital, came and stood near him, he again, by the assistance of the nurse, arose up partly from his pillow, and, extending his hand, grasped that of James, while the last tears, and the saddest his eyes had ever wept, fell over his face.

"My poor boy!" he murmured in a low tone, that was tremulous with grief. His voice choked, and his head sunk upon his bosom. In a little while he recovered himself and said, more calmly—

"My son, to see you so wretched, and with so many sad marks of evil about you, crushes my heart to the earth; for I—I alone —am to blame! In an accursed hour, when you were a young and happy child, the bottle entered, by my hands, our pleasant home, and in a few short years destroyed your mother and little sister, made a madman of your father—for I know where I am —and turned you and Agnes friendless upon a wicked and cruel world. But where is Aggy?" the father asked in a changed voice.

James hesitated a little while, and then replied—"She is dead."

Latimer covered his face with his hands and was silent for a few moments.

"Dead!" he at length murmured. "Dead! It is well. God will forgive her errors, if she have committed any, for she must have suffered great temptation."

"James!" resumed the father arousing himself from a state of abstraction, into which he had again fallen. "James! I see too sad evidences of the fact, that you have fallen already into the toils of that monster evil, intemperance, which cursed your father's house! I have but a little while longer to live, my son —even a few minutes may be all that are left to me. With my dying breath, I implore you to let the work of evil which I began, stop where it is. Turn, oh turn, from the path in which you are now walking, into the right way. Oh! my boy—my poor boy!"

The old man's voice choked again, and the hue of death passed over his face. The nurse laid him back upon the pillow. He gasped convulsively for some moments, and then became calm, but lay with his eyes closed, and his breath coming feebly. James saw his lips move, and he leaned closer to hear.

"There is but one hope—the pledge. If he would take that!"

The son heard and understood the meaning of the words. The moment this thought came whispering from the lips of the dying man, he started up eagerly, and groped about with his hands.

"James! James!" he said, as he grasped hold of his boy. "The pledge! the pledge! They say it is all-powerful to save. It is your only hope!"

The death rattle choked all further utterance, and old Mr. Latimer fell back, heavily, upon his pillow. His spirit had gone to its reward.

"Sign it!" said a voice, in the ear of the son, as he raised himself up from the dead body of his father, over which he had bent in a passion of grief. James turned, and saw the benevolent individual who had taken so much pains to find him out and bring him to his father, standing with an open pledge in one hand and a pen in the other.

"Sign it!" he repeated. "Your father said truly, it is your only hope."

James took the pen in his trembling hand, subscribed his name, and then, bending forward, with his face down upon the table at which he had seated himself, wept and sobbed for a long, long time, like a guilty but repentant child.

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Arlington, the person to whose good offices James Latimer was indebted for the interview with his father, as just related, was not the man to lift a poor human being out of the mire and filth of moral pollution, inspired by a momentary impulse, and then let him fall again, to sink deeper than before. No. Benevolence, with him, sprang from a religious principle. He was one of those temperance men who act not from mere enthusiasm, but from a deeply-grounded and ever-living desire to benefit mankind.

When James left the building where he had witnessed the death of his father, he was not permitted to wander away and be left to himself again, with all his evil desires and appetites struggling to regain their mastery over him.

"What are you going to do now, my young friend?" asked Mr. Arlington, as they walked away from the hospital.

"Going to do?" The question had not of itself occurred to James, and he was unprepared to answer it.

"Yes. Are you engaged in any kind of employment?'

"No. I can 't get any thing to do."

"What can you do?" asked Mr. Arlington.

"Do?"

"Yes. Have you a trade?"

"No sir."

"What have you done since you were in New York?"

"I 've kept bar."

Mr. Arlington shook his head.

"How old are you?" he asked.

"Nineteen."

"Not too late, yet, to learn an honest trade, if you are willing to do so."

"I am willing to do any thing," replied James, "rather than lead the wretched life I have known in this city."

"You must go home with me," said Mr. Arlington, after thinking a little while, "and we will talk this matter all over, and determine what is best to be done."

James looked down at his miserable apparel, and then shook his head.

"Why not?" asked this kind friend.

"I am not fit to go into a decent person's house."

Mr. Arlington understood, very well, that clean and decent apparel was absolutely necessary for James as a means of sustaining him in the sudden good resolutions he had formed. He knew that even his pledge would not hold him up, if his person remained filthy and his garments unclean. And he felt it to be as much a duty to supply this absolute want, as to take the initiative step in his reformation. He therefore provided him with an entire new suit of coarse, but good clothing; and then took him to a public bath-house that he might thoroughly cleanse his person. After this he introduced him into his own family and kept a watchful eye over him for a few days. During this time James was employed about the shop; but Mr. Arlington was careful not to send him out upon errands, except occasionally for fear that he might fall in with some of his old companions and be led off by them. One morning, after James had been with him for about a week, Mr. Arlington said—

"It is not too late for you to learn a trade, and I think you had better set about it immediately. There is nothing like regu-

lar employment to sustain the mind in its good resolutions. Besides, you will soon be a man, and must then have the ability to support yourself. I have an old friend residing in Newark, New Jersey, who is a very kind man. He carries on the cabinet-making business, and, I know, wants an apprentice. If I give you a letter to him, he will take you. What do you think of this?"

"I am ready to go, sir," was James's prompt reply.

"Very well. To-night I will write a letter to my friend, Mr. Seymour, and you can start for Newark in the boat to-morrow morning. You will have a good place, and be removed from the temptations of a great city like this."

Gladly did James Latimer embrace this opportunity to get away from the city and obtain a good place. Since he had taken the pledge, and been introduced among pure-minded, virtuous and intelligent persons, his mind had felt an earnest desire to become as good and as respectable as those around him. The offer of so good a place as Mr. Arlington represented the one to which he was going, to be, and the prospect of acquiring an honest and profitable trade, elevated the spirits of the young man, and made him feel happier than he had ever been since that first innocent period of childhood, ere the bottle came in with its companions, sin and misery.

Mr. Arlington accompanied James to the boat on the next day, and after paying his passage to Newark, most earnestly and affectionately admonished him not to forget the pledge he had taken, nor to lose sight, for a moment, of the fact, that if he would continue steadily to look up, he would certainly rise into respectability, and become a prosperous and happy man. James promised every thing, and parted with his benefactor with tears in his eyes.

It was a bright and beautiful day, and as the boat went rushing through the sparkling water, James experienced a sense of exhilaration and buoyancy that excited his wonder. He felt like a new being. True purposes, and the effort to act from these purposes, introduced him into a new and purer spiritual association. Passion, evil lust, and debasing appetite, were at rest, and right thoughts and feelings were ruling in his mind.

"I can and I will lead a better life," he said to himself, resolutely. "The way is now plain before me, and I will walk in it with a firm step."

When the boat landed at Newark, James made inquiry for Mr. Seymour, and, on finding him, presented his letter of introduction. Mr. Seymour he thought a much graver man than Mr. Arlington, and he did not, at first, feel very comfortable in his presence. The letter was read twice through before a remark was made.

"Well, young man," said Mr. Seymour, at length, looking up at him, and regarding him intently. "What my good friend, Mr. Arlington, says of your past life does n't promise much for the future; but the pledge, which he says you have taken, promises every thing; though I am afraid you are almost too old to learn my trade as well as you ought to know it by the time you are of age. However, there is nothing like trying; and, if you will do your best, no doubt in the end you will make a good workman."

"I can only try, sir," returned James, soberly.

"Try. Yes; if you will try earnestly, my young friend, there is no fear. You have entered the right way, and if you diligently attend to your steps, success, prosperity and happiness will surely be reached. Doubtless, you understand that in entering my family, you must conform to its rules, and be governed by the strictest regard to what is orderly and decorous. I permit, neither in my shop nor house, the use of profane or indecent language. I expect all my family to go to church with me regularly every Sabbath, and to act becomingly on that day."

"Try me, sir!" was the only reply made to this by James Latimer.

"I will try you. Come! Let me introduce you into my shop, and to your fellow-workmen."

James followed Mr. Seymour up stairs into his workshop.

"This stout lad," said the cabinet-maker to his foreman, "has come over from the city to-day, and I have agreed to take him as an apprentice and teach him the business. Make him as useful about the shop as you can, and put him forward as fast as possible. You will find him willing and industrious, and as quiet and orderly, I am sure, as any boy in the shop."

Mr. Seymour then left James with the foreman.

The first fruits of the pledge had become apparent. Industry had taken the place of idleness, and order of disorder. There was a good promise for the future.

CHAPTER XI.

When Mr. Seymour became acquainted, more minutely, with the history of James Latimer, he had some fears about the consequences of introducing into his family one who had been so familiar with vice, and who had fallen so low in the scale of degradation. He understood well the force of the precept, "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" and he felt, for a time, uneasy, lest the evil of the lad's heart should break over all recently applied restraints, and others be injured by coming in contact with him. Fortunately for all, no such unhappy consequences followed. The entire removal of James from old scenes and companions, a total abstinence from that exciter of evil and corrupt passions—strong drink—daily useful employment, and new and virtuous associations, sustained him in his good resolutions.

And yet he was, by no means, free from temptations, and they, at times, strong and almost over-mastering. Often, the labor he had to undergo for so many hours in succession, proved irksome, and his thoughts would turn to the freedom of other days, while his heart pined for the liberty to do as he pleased, which he once possessed. Mr. Seymour, whose watchful eyes were rarely withdrawn from the youth he had taken into his family, noticed his changing states of mind, and was careful to meet them in such a way as best to sustain him in the hour of temptation. He early introduced him into one of the temperance societies, and managed to get him interested and actively engaged in the cause. James needed some excitement of mind, and this furnished just what was wanted. Mr. Seymour also sent him to night school, for his education was extremely defective, where he rapidly improved himself. There was a very good library in his master's house, and there were also several weekly literary and temperance papers taken by Mr. Seymour; these furnished James with the right kind of occupation for leisure hours, and gradually made impressions upon his mind deep enough to obliterate, in a good degree, the marks left by passion, vice, and debasing sensuality.

A year in the family and workshop of Mr. Seymour, wrought wonders for the young man. The distorting marks left upon his countenance by a long course of evil indulgence, were fast disap-

pearing, and giving place to a manly, open, benevolent, and elevating expression. He was industrious and faithful in his work, and quiet, orderly and respectful in the family of his master. His zeal in the cause of temperance was a gradually progressing impulse; and from simply being a partaker of its benefits, he became an active promoter of the cause, and a warm advocate of its doctrines. Wherever there was work to be done, you would find young Latimer standing ready to enter into it, and with an earnestness that ensured success to his efforts.

There was, in the family of Mr. Seymour, a young girl, not so old by a year or two as James, whose kindness had, from the first, caused him to regard her with feelings of gratitude and good will. All that James knew about Mary, was, that she was a niece to Mr. Arlington, of whom she sometimes spoke in terms of affection. Gradually, the young man became interested in Mary Arlington. He regularly accompanied her to and from church on Sundays, and sought every convenient and proper opportunity to be with her during the week. Mr. Seymour observed this, and felt it to be his duty to notify Mary's uncle of the fact. The intelligence was not pleasing to the latter. He knew little more about the young man, than that he had been raised under the most corrupting and debasing influences, from which he had only been removed a short time. During that time he had, it is true, conducted himself with great propriety; but he felt that the risk would be too great to permit anything more than an ordinary intimacy to spring up between the young man and Mary. And he wrote to Mr. Seymour to this effect.

The cabinet-maker felt that he was in an unpleasant dilemma. The intercourse between the young people was so prudent, so open, and so free from anything that gave him the smallest excuse for interfering with them, that he could neither do nor say any thing on the subject. His wife, more shrewd than either he or the uncle, in matters of this kind, warned him, that he had better let them alone; for if he attempted to interfere, he would be sure to fan even the smallest spark of love into a flame.

Several communications passed between Mr. Seymour and the uncle, which resulted in the determination of Mr. Arlington to remove his niece to the city, and take her into his own family. This was approved by the cabinet-maker. Both Mary and James heard of this decision with pain; though both were igno-

rant of the cause which led to it. The natural consequence that followed the thought of separation, was a revelation to the heart of each, that a deeper interest was felt in the other, than had been supposed. They had not been lovers before; or rather, had not known that they were interested in each other to any very great extent. Now, they not only acknowledged the fact to themselves, but mutually confessed it.

On the afternoon of the last Sabbath Mary was to spend in Newark, James asked her to take a walk with him, and they went out together. They were moving along slowly, in the pleasant suburbs of the city, and had fallen into an earnest conversation, when all at once Mary started with an exclamation of painful surprise. The eyes of the young man had been upon the ground, but he looked up quickly and saw, approaching, and close to them, a wretched-looking object, in the person of a miserable drunkard, with mean and soiled attire, who was staggering along, just able to maintain his balance.

Mary stood, like one petrified, while the debased creature approached. But he was too much intoxicated to know any one, and passed on without seeming aware that he had attracted attention. After he had passed Mary turned and looked after him for some moments, while the tears came into her eyes and fell over her cheeks.

"Who is he?" asked James, whose liveliest interest was awakened.

"My poor father!" murmured Mary, in a sad, quivering voice.

James was silent. The sympathy he felt for Mary was too deep for expression.

"Let us go home," he said, in a moment or two. And they walked back, together, nearly the whole way in silence.

"Does your father live in Newark?" James asked, before they reached home.

"Sometimes," said Mary, in a choking voice.

The young man said no more. But he resolved that he would learn, from those who could tell him, the history of Mary's family; and he also resolved, as he walked silently by the young girl's side, that he would devote every power he possessed to the reformation of her father.

"To-morrow she leaves us," he said, to himself. "And to

morrow evening I will seek out this wretched man and reform him, if that be within the power of human action.

That evening Mary spent alone in her own room, with a sad and sorrowful heart. And the next day, she left for the city, to go into the family of her uncle. Before going to his work in the morning, James sought an interview of a few moments.

"Mary," he said, as they were about parting, speaking with great earnestness, "I will search out your father, and never cease my efforts, until I restore him to you and to his family, clothed and in his right mind."

Mary did not, for she could not trust herself to reply to this; but the look of tender thankfulness that was in her tearful eyes, and upon her drooping countenance, gave the heart of young Latimer a new inspiration and was an earnest of the high reward that awaited his success in what he had resolved to accomplish, if the thing were in the power of man.

CHAPTER XII.

What James Latimer proposed to do, he did not mention to any one, after he had briefly informed Mary of what was in his mind. She left, according to previous arrangement, on Monday morning, and he went to work with soberer feelings than he had known for some time. His thoughts were, for the most of the day, with the gentle girl whose influence upon him had been for good, ever since happier circumstances than his life had known, had brought them together in the same family. He could not have believed, but for this experience, that so much that made his days pass pleasantly, had depended upon her.

After tea, on that very evening, James, without mentioning to any one the purpose that was in his mind, went out and proceeded to that part of the town where the largest number of low grog shops and eating houses were situated. He entered the first that came in his way, and going up to the bar, behind which stood a man, waiting to mix his liquid poisons for the destruction of his fellow men, said—

"Do you know a man named Arlington?"

"Do n't I!" replied the man, facetiously.

"Have you seen him to-day?"

"I guess so."

"Was he here?"

"Yes."

"At what time?"

"About an hour ago, I reckon. What do you want with him?"

"I should like to find him."

"He 's a rum customer!" said the man, with a vulgar laugh.

"Who 's that?" asked a person, who was sitting in the bar-room, getting up and coming forward.

"Arlington," was replied.

"Oh! yes. Pretty much of a bruiser. Is he about in these parts again?"

"Yes; he 's been loafing about Newark for several days," replied the rumseller. "He 's been in several times to try and get a dram without the money; but I know him of old, and have wet his whistle too often for nothing. Poor devil! It 's most time he died off."

James had been familiar, at one period, with such coarse, unfeeling allusions to poor, fallen and degraded men, by those who had a large share of the responsibility of their ruin; but now the words of the rumseller fell with a painful shock upon his ears. He waited to hear no more, but turned away and left the groggery. Only a few doors off, he came to another sink of depravity and vice, into which he entered, and asked the same question. As he mentioned the name of Arlington, a voice growled out from the corner of the room—

"Who wants me, ha?"

Latimer turned and recognized the person he had seen reeling along the street on the day before. He had been lying upon a bench, and was getting up as the young man's eyes rested upon him.

"Who wants me, ha?" was repeated.

"I do," replied James, going up to him.

"You do! Pray, who are you?"

"A friend, I hope."

"Indeed! Then, if you are a friend, just treat for the sake of old acquaintance. I 'd treat you—upon my word I would—but,

I pledge you my honor, I 've not got a sixpence to bless myself with."

And as the poor sot said this, he turned his vest pockets inside out in proof of his assertion.

"Oh, never mind the treat now," replied James. "But come with me. I 've something very particular to say to you."

"Say it here, then. It 's a very good place. But do, for heaven's sake, call for a couple of glasses. We can go into a box all to ourselves, and have a comfortable time of it. That 's a clever soul."

And the poor creature looked imploringly at James. The fact was, he had not a copper in his pocket, and as no grog-seller would give him either food or drink, he had neither eaten any thing nor taken a glass of liquor since morning. The consequence was, that he was almost mad from an insatiate desire for the old stimulus. James saw that his hand, which in his earnestness he had placed upon his arm, was trembling nervously.

"I 'll tell you what I will do," the young man said, after reflecting a moment.

"What will you do?"

"Have you eaten anything to-day?"

"No; not a mouthful. But I do n't feel at all hungry."

"No matter if you do n't. You must eat, or you will die. If you 'll have a cup of strong coffee and a plate of hot oysters, I will order them for you."

"Thank you, sir! thank you, sir! But never mind the coffee. Hot punch will do just as well, and better too."

"No. You 've had punches enough. I 'll order coffee, if you say the word."

"Very well. Let it be coffee then," replied the besotted creature, in a disappointed voice.

James ordered coffee and oysters, and asked, at the same time, if there was n't a room in which they could be alone, as he had something particular to say to Arlington. The bar-keeper showed them to a room up stairs, to which the coffee and oysters came in due time. It was not until both had disappeared, and the man's mind was in a calmer and more rational state, that James sought to make some impression upon him.

"You feel better now, a great deal, I am sure," he said familiarly.

"There 's no doubt of that. But, young man, who are you? and what do you want with me? I never saw you before," said Arlington, his face becoming serious.

"Nor I you, till yesterday," said James.

"Till yesterday! Where did you see me yesterday?"

"Staggering along the street, too much intoxicated to see or heed any one."

"Humph! But who told you my name?"

"Your daughter Mary."

The whole manner of Arlington instantly changed. He looked surprised, and there were evidences of the passage through his mind of painful thoughts.

"Did she see me?" he asked, in a subdued voice.

"I was walking with her, when you came suddenly reeling past. Ah, sir! If you could have seen how she was struck down! If you could have witnessed the darkening of her innocent face, as the shadow of your presence fell upon her, you would curse the cup of confusion, and throw it from you forever."

An expression of anguish came over the countenance of Arlington, and his frame trembled violently.

"Poor Mary!" pursued James. "It was like a heavy blow upon her heart! Ah, sir! How can you turn away from one who would love you with the fondness of such a child? How can you keep forever dark, the home that was once made bright by her presence?"

"Young man!" exclaimed Arlington, suddenly rising up. "Who are you, that comes to me with words like these? What do you mean? I will not suffer such language."

"I am one who would save you from ruin," replied James, in a soothing voice. "It is for this that I have sought you out."

"It is in vain, young man," said Arlington, resuming his seat. "I cannot reform."

"Have you ever tried?" asked James.

"Tried! Heaven knows how often I have tried," replied the man in a sad voice. "But it 's no use. I have been a drinking man so long that I have lost all power over myself."

"Oh no. You err there. I have seen men who were as far gone as you are, reform and become perfectly sober."

"I 've tried, sir — I 've tried; but it 's no use," objected Arlington. "If I thought there was any hope——"

"Hope! You have everything to hope!" said James in a cheerful voice. "Come with me; and I will show you that there is hope."

"Come where?"

"Come away from here. There is no hope for you in a place like this. You must breathe a purer and better atmosphere, if you expect to get power over the dreadful appetite that has cursed you and your family with a most direful curse."

James arose, and moved towards the door as he thus spoke Arlington felt a sphere of attraction towards the young man, and arising also, followed him down stairs and from the house. When in the street, James put his hand upon the arm of the man he was so earnestly seeking to rescue from the hands of the spoiler, while yet a remnant of the human form remained in his mind, and said—

"A little way from here are some friends of mine, who have met to devise the ways and means of helping men like you to reform themselves. Go with me."

Arlington stopped short.

"What is it?" he asked. "A temperance meeting?"

"Yes."

"I can't go there."

"Why not?" asked James.

"I do n't believe in these temperance reforms."

"Why do n't you?"

"They 're no good."

"No good?"

"No. They 're just got up by the few to get money out of the many."

"So the rumsellers say. But even if this were so, you had better pay a dollar or two a year to be made a sober man, than give to the rumseller nearly every thing you can earn, in order to be made a miserable drunkard."

"I never thought of that," said Arlington, a little staggered by such a knock-down argument.

"But it is a very plain way of looking at the matter. And as for temperance societies being got up for the purpose of putting money into the pockets of the few at the expense of the many—it is a base slander. Temperance societies really put money into the pockets of the many. The drinking man who unites himself

with men banded together for their own good and the good of their fellows, saves money by it. At the end of a year, he is astonished at the result."

"I don't think I would like to sign a pledge. I am afraid I would break it."

"Never mind any thing about the pledge, man. Come with me to this temperance meeting, and see and hear for yourself."

"I 'd rather not." And Arlington held back.

"No matter then. But walk on with me. I have a good many things to say to you."

And they moved slowly along, young Latimer taking the direction of a temperance hall, and using all the means that presented themselves to his mind, in order to beget in Arlington a willingness to go to the meeting that was held on that night. Happily, his efforts proved successful, and the miserable effigy of humanity, whose race, had he continued longer to drink, was nearly run, went in with him, and sat down near the door.

There happened to be a lecturer from another place there that evening—a man who had great power as a speaker to interest the common mind. His address, which was begun soon after Arlington came in, was mostly made up of narrations by experience of a deeply pathetic character. Some of the incidents he related came home to the mind of the poor drunkard with startling effect. In more than one picture, drawn with graphic power, he saw himself so plainly, that there were moments when he felt that he alone was meant.

All the while, the eyes of James Latimer, who sat a little apart from him, were fixed upon him with anxious interest. He saw that the mind of Arlington was reached, and he felt his bosom glow with the hope of saving him. Particularly did the lecturer dwell upon the power of the pledge—upon the strength given to the mind by association—and related many instances where drunkards, who had fallen almost as low as a man could fall, had been reclaimed, and were now happily united with their families. In closing his address, he described a case wonderfully similar to that of Arlington's; and drew a sun-bright picture of the family re-union that took place, soon after the husband and father signed the pledge. Latimer saw that the father of Mary was deeply moved by this. When the lecturer, after holding up a pledge, urged the poor drunkard to come for-

ward and with the stroke of a pen emancipate himself from the power of evil, he saw Arlington move, as if urged by a strong impulse to go up and declare himself free. In a moment the young man was at his side.

"Come!" he said in a gentle yet earnest voice.

Arlington arose as if by instinct, and went forward with James by his side. A deep and solemn stillness pervaded the room. There were many present who knew the history of the repentant man, and those who did not, read a sad enough history in his marred countenance and miserable garments.

With a trembling hand he took the pen, and subscribed the pledge that Latimer had taken hold of and held firmly to the table.

"Thank God!" burst involuntarily, from the lips of the young man, as the pen dropped from the fingers of Arlington. And many a piously-uttered "Amen," answered to the fervent ejaculation.

CHAPTER XIII.

Although Mary Arlington was kindly received by her uncle and his family, the change made her feel unhappy; and she understood well that this was in consequence of her absence from James, and the prospect of seeing him but rarely, if at all, for the future. The cause of her removal, at so short a notice, from Newark, she did not understand, and she had many conjectures on the subject. But a suspicion of the real truth did not cross her mind. Her daily thoughts were of James, and she would lie awake at night for hours with his image in her mind. The separation of the young man and maiden, was the very way to render permanent any impressions which their hearts might have received, and this the uncle ought to have known, and would have known, if he had given the subject proper reflection.

Mary had been in New York for nearly a week, when her uncle brought her a letter. Mr. Arlington had not broken the seal, although he had debated for some hours the propriety of doing so; as the post mark was Newark, he more than suspected the writer of it to be young Latimer. When Mary received the

letter, her uncle noticed that her face suddenly lightened up. She retired with it to her chamber immediately.

The young girl had been away only a few minutes, when she came bounding back into the room where her uncle and aunt were sitting, with the open letter in her hand, and tears of irrepressible joy upon her cheeks.

"Read that! read that!" she exclaimed, thrusting the letter towards her uncle and then sinking down by her aunt, and hiding her weeping face in her lap. Mr. Arlington read aloud:—

"DEAR MARY:—I have done as I promised to do. On the evening of the very day you left, I went out in search of your father, and happily found him. He was exhausted from want of food, and the absence, through lack of money to obtain it, of his accustomed stimulus. I bought him a good supper, and the hot coffee warmed and sustained him better than liquor. Then, through earnest persuasion, I got him to our Monday night meeting, where *he signed the pledge*, and he is now, thank Heaven, in his right mind. Mr. Seymour has been very kind to him. He gave him clothes, took him into his house, and, although not really in want of another journeyman, gave him work in the shop. I told your father that I was going to write to you. He sends his love to you, and to your uncle and aunt; and hopes you will forgive him for all the wretchedness you have suffered on his account. He says he wishes that you were only here. And I am sure I do. I am certain your presence would be a great help to your father. Ask your uncle if he does not think so.

"And now good-by, Mary. I will hope to see you soon.

"JAMES LATIMER."

The voice of Mr. Arlington failed several times as he read this gladdening letter; and when he had finished it, he got up and walked about the room for some moments, struggling to keep down his feelings. When he had regained his self-possession, he went to his niece and raising her up from where she was lying with her face still buried in the lap of her aunt, kissed her tenderly, and said—

"Yes, dear, James is right. You had better go back. Your presence will be every thing to your father. Can you get ready to return in the afternoon boat?"

"I am ready to go at a moment's notice," replied Mary, in a quick voice.

Then, as if conscious that there was, in her manner, a too evident wish to leave the family of her uncle and aunt, she added—

"Not that I do not feel your kindness; but ought I to be away from my father now?"

"No, Mary, not for a day. He needs all the sustaining power we can give him."

After Mr. Arlington signed the pledge, James Latimer managed to keep near him all the while. When work was done in the evening, he would devise some means of interesting him, and he found the easiest way to do so, was to read aloud temperance stories, or the doings of temperance men as recorded in the newspapers devoted to the cause. Often would the unhappy man, in whose bosom conscience was doing its reforming work, weep over the recital of incidents so like those that had occurred in his own life, that he could hardly persuade himself that he was not pointed at in the story.

James had come home from his work, in company with Mr. Arlington, on the day after he wrote to Mary, and they were sitting together and talking, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and in bounded the very one of whom they were just speaking.

"Mary!" exclaimed both Mr. Arlington and James at the same instant.

In a moment the happy girl was in her father's arms. James with an instinctive feeling of delicacy, withdrew and left them alone.

It was soon understood in the house that Mary had come back to remain, and it was pleasant news to all. Mr. and Mrs. Seymour could not have given their own child a more cordial welcome home. And as for James Latimer, his efforts to conceal his delight were so poorly successful that his true feelings were hidden from no one.

The mother of Mary Arlington had been compelled, three years before, to go home to her friends in New-Brunswick, where she was now residing. Two young children were with her. She had borne want, neglect, ill-treatment, and all manner of privation, until health and spirits failed, and she was taken away from her brutalized and unfeeling husband, almost by force. Since

that time, he often came where she was, saddening her heart with his presence. Sometimes he came only to vent upon her his drunken abuse, and sometimes to get money from her to gratify his insatiate appetite.

Two months from the time of his reformation, of which fact no word had reached the ears of Mrs. Arlington, for it had been purposely concealed from her, the dejected wife and mother was sitting with her youngest child, a boy five years old, on her lap, and a daughter ten years old, standing by her chair and leaning against her, when a well dressed man opened the door, and stepped in. Several moments passed, and still Mrs. Arlington looked earnestly at him, but without speaking.

"Don't you know me, Mary!"

The voice swept all doubt away, and with a cry of joy the wife sprung forward and threw herself into the arms of her husband.

"Dear Mary!" said Arlington, disengaging himself from the clinging embrace of his wife, and kissed first one child and then the other. "All is well. Two months have passed since I signed the pledge, and I have been at work for Mr. Seymour ever since."

"Heavenly Father! I thank thee!" murmured the wife, with clasped hands and eyes turned tearfully upward. By this time, the children were in his arms.

"Yes, to Him be the praise, Mary; for it was His hand that digged me out of the deep pit," replied Arlington.

"And Mary," said his wife, recovering herself, and looking with a glad smile into her husband's sober face, "is she at Mr. Seymour's?"

"Yes. And I have been living in the house ever since I signed the pledge."

"And it is two months since this happy change took place, and I did not know it! Why have you concealed it so long?"

"That neither doubt nor fear might accompany its announcement. Two months of sobriety and industry have confirmed my good resolutions, and given me internal strength. I am not temperate now, because I have taken the pledge, but because I feel intemperance to be an evil, and shun it as a sin against God."

"And God will give strength in your weakness, if you ever look to him."

"I feel that he will. But, Mary, I have come to bring you

still further good news. My brother has furnished me a little house in Newark; I have fifty dollars already laid by from my earnings, to begin with, and only wait for you to join me once more, and in a happy, temperance home! Mary took possession this morning, and is now waiting to receive you. In two hours the train of cars will be along. Can you be ready to go down by them?"

"Oh yes!" returned the wife. "I will be ready."

A little while after, she asked, in a changed voice, while a shade of sadness passed over her face—

"Have you heard anything of John?"

Arlington shook his head.

"I wonder where he can be. I think of him every day, almost every hour."

"Heaven only knows. But, if there was hope for me, Mary, there is hope for him. I trust in God that he will yet be reclaimed. My next work must be to find him, and use every means to get him to take the pledge. It is the only hope for him."

In the mean time, the happy daughter, who had taken possession of their new home, was busy with many preparations for the reception of her mother, whom she had not seen for more than a year. As the time for the cars to arrive, drew near, Mr. and Mrs. Seymour came over to join in the happy welcome; and James, feeling an equal interest, and privileged, now, from his agency in the reformation of Mr. Arlington, to show what he felt, left his work, and putting on his best suit, came also.

The little parlor where they all assembled, was neatly and comfortably, though plainly furnished, with a mahogany table, half a dozen chairs, and a good carpet. There were no pictures upon the wall; but conspicuous above the mantle hung the all potent pledge, which Arlington had handsomely framed with his own hand, and hung full in view that it might be to him a daily remembrance.

Sooner by a quarter of an hour than they had been expected—for the very locomotive seemed to have been inspired by its happy burden—Arlington and his family arrived.

To describe, adequately, the joy of that family reunion, were impossible. The mother rushed, weeping, into her daughter's arms, and they stood locked in a close embrace for many minutes.

Then Willy and Jane received the caresses and listened to the glad words of their happy sister. All was, for a time, sweet confusion, in which hearts overflowed without restraint; and then a deep peace succeeded. Mr. and Mrs. Seymour now uttered their heart-warm congratulations; and James was presented to the mother of Mary as the active instrument by whom this great good had been wrought. Mrs. Arlington took the young man's hands in hers, and holding them tightly, prayed, audibly, that the blessing of Heaven might rest upon his head.

How sweet a reward for a good deed! The heart of James Latimer bounded with a feeling of intense delight. All present were softened into tears.

There have been few family reunions, fraught with such joy as this.

CHAPTER XIV.

There was no impediment, now, in the way of James keeping company with Mary Arlington, who remained with her mother. Mr. and Mrs. Arlington always welcomed him to their house with the utmost cordiality, and Mary never looked coldly upon him.

Time wore on. Months flowed into months, and still the reformed man went daily to work, and came back to his family at evening, cheerful and contented, bringing light into his dwelling whenever he appeared. Association with those who had the good cause deeply at heart, removed him from all temptation. There was no one to put a block of stumbling in his way—no one to draw him aside by any allurement. And at home, all was so happy, that the bare thought of any act of his by which sorrow and distress should again cross his threshold, made him shudder.

But, notwithstanding the blessings which this re-united family enjoyed and thankfully acknowledged, there still existed a cause of grief. John, the oldest son, had, like his father, fallen a victim to the great Moloch—strong drink; and after leading, for some years, a dissolute life, had gone off, and they had not heard from him for a long time. The father believed him dead, but the

mother clung to the hope that he was yet alive. John was in his twenty-third year when he went away, and he had been gone for over two years.

"If we only could hear something of John," Mrs. Arlington said so often in the hearing of James Latimer, who was a constant visitor of the house, that the young man determined to make such efforts as were in his power to find the absent one. He, accordingly, obtained the names of leading and active temperance men in all the principal cities, and wrote, earnestly desiring them to ascertain, if possible, whether the person he described was in their neighborhood. To these communications, he received many answers, but none of them satisfactory. He did not mention to any one what he was doing, not even to Mary. To raise hopes, that might be all in vain, he knew would be worse than to leave all as it was. But he did not relax his efforts. To more distant cities he sent off his letters of inquiry, and patiently waited for answers. Many replies were received but none brought the desired intelligence.

This went on, until James attained his twenty-first year, having served his master faithfully, and obtained, in the short time, he had to learn his trade, very fair skill as a workman. Mr. Seymour retained him as a journeyman at good wages.

Soon after this, Latimer applied, formally, to Mr. Arlington, still a sober man and now an active promoter of the temperance cause, for the hand of his daughter.

"If her heart is with you, my young friend," replied the father, "you have my fullest sanction. I owe you almost every thing, and make this return with gladness. I need not tell you how good a girl Mary is. You know all her excellencies. May heaven smile upon your love!"

There was now a smooth sea for the bark of their love to sail upon, and favoring airs were ready to waft it over the glassy waters. But Latimer had resolved not to ask for the consummation of their love in marriage, until all hope of finding and reclaiming the lost brother was at an end. Nearly a year went by after he had attained his majority, and still no word had come from the wandering member of the re-united family, and James was about adopting the opinion of Mr. Arlington that he was dead, when a letter reached him from a temperance lecturer in Pittsburg, to whom he had written. It was as follows:

"My Dear Sir: I have learned that a person by the name of Arlington, who answers, in most respects, your description, spent the last winter and spring in this place, working in a coach factory. But he indulged in drinking so freely, that he was discharged a month or two ago, and left here in a flat boat for some place down the river. No doubt he is in some of the towns between this and the mouth of the Ohio.

Respectfully yours, ——.'

With this letter Latimer went over to see the uncle of Mary, and to him declared his determination to go out West and search out and seek to reclaim the young man.

"I have two hundred dollars laid by," he said, "and that will bear my expenses."

A proposition that evinced such generous and noble self-devotion, touched the heart of Mr. Arlington, and he instantly replied—

"If you are ready to give your time, James, I am ready to bear every dollar of the expense. Let what you have lain by remain untouched. Providence has blessed my industry with a good return, and if I can use any part of what he has given me in saving a soul for his kingdom, it is my duty to do so. Have you mentioned this to my brother?"

"No. I wish to create no false hopes."

"Nor to Mary?"

"No. When I bring home the reclaimed son and brother, it will be time enough."

"What excuse will you make for going away?"

"I have not settled that; it is the smallest thing to be considered now. Even if my excuse is not at first deemed a good one, it will be differently estimated in the end."

"True."

"I must start at a very early day. No time is to be lost. In the downward course of a drunkard, there is no telling how soon the end may come."

"Go, noble-hearted young man!" replied Mr. Arlington with warmth, "and He who has filled your heart with so generous an enthusiasm in a good cause, will give your efforts, I feel an assurance in my heart, the most perfect success."

In a week James Latimer started for Philadelphia, whence he

intended proceeding direct to Pittsburg. He failed in satisfying any one of his friends in Newark in regard to the journey he was about taking. Mr. Seymour looked very grave about it; Mr. Arlington said nothing, but was sober; and Mary parted from him with a sad, tearful, and half-rebuking face. All this was painful to James, but he was self-sustained in a good purpose, and left expressing a hope to be with them all again in a very short time.

In Pittsburg, Latimer found the shop at which the brother of Mary had worked, and from inquiries among the journeymen who had been most familiar with him, fully satisfied himself in regard to his identity. He also learned that when the young man left he had declared his intention of going to Cincinnati.

On the day following his arrival at Pittsburg, James left in a down-river boat, and at every town where they stopped improved the short period the boat remained at the landing, in making inquiries from those likely to know, touching the object of his search. But no one could impart any information.

At length Latimer found himself in the Queen City of the West. But he had no eye to admire any thing he saw; he stopped to look at nothing with wondering interest. In half an hour after the boat touched the wharf, he was abroad in the city, on his errand of mercy.

As young Arlington had learned the trade of a coach-maker, James went, first, to every establishment of this character in the place to make inquiries for him. But the search was fruitless. He then spent two days among the grog-shop keepers and boat-men, but with no better success. He was about relinquishing his efforts to find the one he sought in Cincinnati, when a man in one of the liquor stores at which he had called, hearing him mention the name of Arlington, said—

"Who? Jack Arlington do you mean?"

"Yes," replied Latimer. "Do you know where he is?"

"He's in rather a hot place by this time, I should think."

"Why do you say that?" anxiously inquired Latimer.

"I saw him in Natchez-under-the-Hill, three weeks ago. But as Yellow Jack had hold of him, I rather think it's all day with him now."

"Yellow Jack?" said Latimer inquiringly. He did not understand the term.

"Yellow fever," replied the man; "and the way it was taking hold of him was a caution to sinners. When I left him, I would n't have given the snap of my finger for his life."

But notwithstanding the slender hope this information gave to Latimer, he made particular inquiries of the man where he had seen John Arlington, and took passage in the next boat that started for Louisville. At this place he found only one boat up for Natchez, and that was advertised to go in the afternoon. At five o'clock, the time mentioned in the advertisement, Latimer went on board, and waited impatiently for the boat to start, but waited in vain. Towards sundown he received information that she would not leave the landing until the next morning. Vexed and disappointed, he left the boat and walked up into the town. As he was strolling along Main street, he passed a man in whose appearance there was something that particularly arrested his attention, but why, he could not tell. Involuntarily, he turned and looked after him. The man was miserably clad, and walked, either from weakness or intoxication, with an unsteady gait. After standing and gazing at him for a short time, Latimer moved along in the direction the man was going, and followed him until he saw him enter one of the many drinking dens that lined a cross street, near the river. Passing on, he walked as far down as Water street, still thinking of the man. There he stood and looked back toward the house into which he had disappeared.

After thinking awhile, Latimer made up his mind, he hardly knew why, to see more of this miserable creature, and, accordingly, walked back and entered the drinking house. He found about half a dozen persons, in a small room, with a low ceiling, the atmosphere of which was scarcely respirable, so loaded down was it with tobacco smoke and the fumes of liquors. The person who had attracted his attention, he found seated at a table, playing cards with a man whose appearance was little better than his own. The amount of the stake was a quarter of a dollar. Latimer took up a newspaper, and sat down under the pretence of reading, but, really, that he might observe the man without drawing attention to himself. The game progressed in silence, yet with evident eagerness on the part of both to win. The hands of the one in whom Latimer felt interested, trembled as he played his cards, and he leaned heavily, for most of the time, as he sat at the table, evidently for the support it gave him.

It was the countenance of this person that most interested Latimer. The more earnestly he looked at him, the more certain was he that he had seen him before, but he searched his memory in vain for the time and the place.

Suddenly the truth flashed upon him. It was the brother of Mary. It was the object of his search! He saw the likeness between him and his sister as clear as a sunbeam. Just as he had made this discovery, the game terminated, and the man with whom he had been playing, exclaimed angrily—

"Jack Arlington! you cheated me!"

A bitter oath fell from the thin, quivering lips of Arlington, as he drew back his fist and made a pass at his opponent. But the latter stepped nimbly aside, and let him stagger forward and fall heavily on the floor. Before Arlington could recover himself, the man drew back his foot and was about kicking him brutally in the face; but Latimer sprang forward in time to prevent this cruelty by grasping him tightly and drawing him back with a sudden jerk. The man endeavored to free himself by violent struggles, swearing dreadfully as he did so; but he was in powerful hands, that held him as securely as if he had been bound with cords.

As soon as the prostrate man had regained his feet, Latimer released his adversary, saying to him in a kind voice as he did so—

"Forgive me, sir; but I could not see you injure one in whom I have a deep interest."

This was interrupted by a volley of oaths and threats. But the man had felt the strength that lay in the young stranger's arm, and did not care to come into personal collision with him.

"And who are you, pray?" said Arlington, a little surprised at the interference, and still more so at an expression of interest in him. There were four or five boxes, as they were called, in the room, to which persons retired to eat or drink. Latimer glanced to one of these in which a candle was burning, and said, as he nodded towards it—

"Come aside with me, and I will tell you."

Arlington followed him, and they sat down together, on opposite sides of a small table, each looking intently into the other's face. There was that in the appearance and manner of Latimer that filled the company with something like respect, and though

they still kept their eyes upon him, anxiously, as he retired with Arlington, no one came near or attempted to interfere with him in any way.

"You ask who I am?" said James, as soon as they were thus alone.

"I do. But, before you answer me, let me thank you for having saved a sick man, who is almost as weak as a child, from brutal violence. And now, let me inquire who you are, and why you feel any interest in a poor wretch like me, who does no good for himself nor any one else?"

"Your name is John Arlington, is it not?" asked Latimer.

"It is."

"You are from the East?"

"Yes."

"You have friends living there?"

"I presume so. But I left home some years ago, and have heard nothing from there since."

"Why have you not written home?"

"Because I could write no good of myself. My poor mother had trouble enough close at hand, without having any sent to her from a distance. But she may be dead now."

"No, she is not dead. I saw her only a short time ago."

"My mother!" exclaimed the young man suddenly, much agitated, and leaning over towards Latimer.

"Yes."

"My mother! And was she well?"

"Yes, and happy, but for the thought of her wandering son."

"Happy! How can she be happy? Is not my father——." The young man paused and set his teeth firmly together.

"Two years ago your father signed the pledge, and, since then, has been industrious, provident and kind. But for *your* absence and errors, your mother's heart would be happy."

"Signed the pledge? Oh no! That is too good news." And the young man shook his head doubtingly.

"It is true," replied Latimer, firmly. "I saw him sign it, and have since worked in the same shop with him, for two years."

"Where?"

"In Newark."

"Is my mother in Newark?" asked Arlington, in a low voice.

"Yes. And your sister Mary is with her."

"And my younger brother and sister?"

"They are at home also."

"And I only am a wanderer and an outcast. Oh! if I only were at home again, and in such a pleasant place as home must *now* be, I am sure I would be a better man. But that is impossible. I have not the means of going back; and if I had, I would not sadden my poor mother's heart with so miserable a spectacle as I present. She thinks me dead, no doubt. Let her remain in ignorance."

"No—no. She believes you still alive, and mourns your absence and wrong doings with unavailing sorrow. Hundreds of times have I heard her say, 'Oh! if John were only with us, and a sober man, my cup would be full.'"

The young man tried to make some answer, but his voice choked, and he sat, silently struggling to repress his feelings.

"For her sake," continued Latimer, "make one more resolute effort to lead a new life. To-morrow I will leave for the East. If you will go with me, I will bear all your expenses. Let me not go home to Newark with only sad tidings for your mother's heart. Rather, let me present you to her as the returned prodigal. What do you say? This may be the last appeal God will ever make to you. Do not disregard it. The way is plain before you—plain even to the home where your eager mother is waiting to receive you. Do not let her wait in vain."

The young man looked fixedly into the face of Latimer. There was a wild struggle going on in his mind.

"But one thing holds me back," he said, in a voice of sadness.

"What is that?"

"The fear that, after making glad my mother's heart, this cursed thirst for liquor, which has for so many years held me in a dreadful bondage, will again overmaster me. Better that no hope should fill her heart, than that her joy should be turned into sorrow. I fear, sir, that it is vain for me to attempt a new life. Let me go on as I am. In a little while it will all be over."

"Vain for you to attempt a new life!" replied Latimer, with enthusiasm. "It is never too late to make this attempt. I have seen hundreds, who had fallen lower than you are now, who have renounced at once and forever the cup of confusion. Look at your own father. Is your case more hopeless than was his? No, it is not, as I well know; for I sought him out, as I have now

sought you out; and I found him so low, that life would not have remained had he sunk much lower. From the hour I met him, up to this day, now two years, not a drop of poison to soul and body has passed his lips; nor does he have the least desire to taste the accursed thing that wrought such ruin to his hopes and happiness. John, the same means of rescue that saved him are at hand. Will you not avail of them? Will you not clutch them eagerly?"

"Yes!" replied the fallen man, speaking with a strong impulse. "But what am I to do?"

"Do as your father did. Sign this document of freedom—this charter of liberty."

And Latimer drew from his pocket a pledge and held it up before the penitent son and brother.

"It is all-powerful!" he continued. "It saved me—it saved your father—it has saved thousands and hundreds of thousands—and it will save you, for though it imparts strength to all, it loses none of its blessed virtue. Sign it!"

And he laid it on the table before the young man, and drawing a pencil from his pocket placed it in his fingers.

Arlington did not hesitate, but clutched eagerly the pencil, and dashed, rather than wrote his signature to the pledge.

"Free! Thank God!" exclaimed Latimer so loud and joyously, that all the inmates of the polluted den, attracted by his words and manner, came pressing up to the box where he sat. In the enthusiasm of the moment, he eloquently exhorted all present to do as Arlington had done, and so effective were his words, that three poor, fallen men subscribed their names to the pledge, and no one present let a word of ridicule or disapproval pass his lips. Even there, the sphere of good was, for the time, powerful enough to hold evil in abeyance.

CHAPTER XV.

THE sudden departure of James Latimer, for which no satisfactory explanation was given, caused Mary, notwithstanding her confidence in her lover, to feel sober. He had said that he was

going on an errand of mercy; but why should the particular object in view he concealed from *her?* This she could not keep from thinking. And the fact, too, that he had studiously concealed from her and from every one else the probable extent of his journey and time of absence, troubled her mind whenever she thought of it.

One, two, three weeks passed, and not one word of intelligence came from the absent one.

"It is strange!" said the father of Mary.

"It is strange!" said the mother.

"It is strange!" thought Mary; and the pensive maiden would lie awake for hours at night seeking, anxiously, in her own thoughts for an explanation of her lover's singular and prolonged absence, but in vain. Still her confidence in him was unimpared. She believed, as he had said, that his errand, whatever it might be, was one of mercy.

It was Saturday night, and Mr. Arlington had come home from his work, bringing his week's wages and placing the money, as usual, in the hands of his wife, who was a good economist, and always managed to keep expenses considerably within the limit of income.

After tea the family gathered in the little parlor, and the father read aloud while Mary and her mother sat sewing at a little work-table. While thus engaged, the whistle of the approaching steam-car was heard; and Mr. Arlington laid down his book and listened. Since the departure of James, every member of this family had felt a new interest in the daily trains of passenger-cars that went sweeping through their town, and would pause, almost involuntarily, when the noise of wheels, or the shrill sound of escaping steam disturbed the quiet air.

"I wish that boy was home again," said Mr. Arlington, as he sat listening to the thrilling scream of the whistle.

"And so do I," answered Mrs. Arlington in a concerned voice. "What could have taken him away?"

"Heaven only knows," said Mary. "It is now three weeks since he went away, and not one word, to tell us that he is even alive, has come."

"Perhaps he will be home to-night," said the mother of Mary. "I have felt, all day, as if I should see him enter the door in the next moment."

And Mary had experienced similar feelings, but she did not say so. Her voice would have trembled too much.

"Let him come when he will, and my word for it, he brings a good account of himself," said Mr. Arlington, confidently.

There was thankfulness in the eyes of Mary, as she looked her response to these words.

"I wish he were home to night," remarked Mrs. Arlington. "I feel as if I could not bear the suspense of his absence any longer, without being unhappy. And something says to me, that he will be home; that he is in the cars that have just arrived. Do you know that I have been thinking of John all day, and that I have had the same feeling in regard to him? If they should come home together!"

"Do n't think that way, mother," said Mr. Arlington; "you will only be fated to disappointment. John, I am sure, has found a grave long and long ago."

"And who knows," exclaimed Mary, who had not listened to her father's reply, clapping her hands together as the thought flashed through her mind—"but that James went in search of brother John!"

Mr. Arlington shook his head doubtingly; but a flush passed over the face of Mrs. Arlington, and a light flashed in her eyes.

"It may be so," replied the latter, in a trembling voice.

"He has been receiving a good many letters from all parts of the country for some time," said Mr. Arlington, "as we know. But never has he spoken to any one of their tenor. He has also written and sent a good many away."

"It must be!" broke in Mary, speaking with confidence and enthusiasm. "Oh! if they should both return to-night!"

"Do n't —do n't conjure up hopes so fallacious, to die, as they must, in disappointment, and render the return of James, when it does take place, less happy for all than it would otherwise be!"——

And even while the father was speaking, the sound of rapidly-approaching feet was heard. The door flew open as the last word fell from his lips, and in rushed the absent ones. Oh! what a happy meeting! What tears; what words of joy; what moments of speechless thankfulness followed the first glad welcoming! The son and brother was restored; the lover and friend had come back! And the fulness of joy was in every heart.

CHAPTER XVI.

But little more remains to be told. The pledge has done *its* work. How well we need not here repeat.

After John Arlington had signed the pledge, James Latimer went with him to a store, and procured a full suit of clothing. The trunk of the latter was then removed from the boat that was to sail down the river in the morning, to one that was to leave on the next day, for Pittsburg; and to this boat the young men repaired and spent half the night in conversation upon past misdeeds, and future hopes of a better and happier life.

As swiftly as rushing steamboat and hurrying car could bear them homeward, did they pursue their journey, and arrived unannounced, formally, but not unannounced, as has been seen, by the hearts' true instincts.

With what a gushing thankfulness did Mary pour out her feelings to James, when they were first alone, after his return.

"You gave me my father," she said, with the glad tears springing to her eyes. "You restored to us our home; and now you have brought back my wandering brother, whom we all mourned as lost. I can never repay you for all this—never, never!"

"You can more than repay me," said James, kissing her lips fondly.—"And you will. Name an early day for our union; no hindrance now remains. Your brother's absence weighed heavily upon you all. The thought that he was a wanderer and an outcast, would have marred the joy of our wedding-day, and I resolved, long ago, that our pledge of love should not be made at the altar, while I had a reasonable hope of finding and reclaiming your brother. No impediment, therefore, now remains. So, Mary, dear, name, as I have just said, an early day."

"How early?" and the happy girl smiled. "Six months from now?"

"Six months! Six weeks will be a long time. It must be earlier than that, Mary. And why not? What impediment is there? Why may not the union to which we have looked so long, be the crowning joy of this blessed time. If you do not

say 'no,' there will be nothing to hinder the happy consummation."

The face of Mary, covered with blushes, was turned partly away."

"Do you say no?" The ardent lover pressed for a decision.

"Let it be as my father and mother think best," murmured the happy maiden.

"I know they will be on my side," joyously fell from the lips of James, as he drew the sweet girl towards him, and almost smothered her with kisses.

And he was right. It was only for him to express a wish for Mr. and Mrs. Arlington to approve. Space sufficient to give timely notice to Mary's uncle in the city was permitted only to elapse before the marriage ceremony was performed in the presence of the reunited family, and a few intimate friends.

"To you, excellent young man!" said the uncle of Mary to James Latimer, as they all sat together that evening, "we owe a debt of gratitude that can never be paid. May you be as happy as you deserve to be; as I know you will be."

"Not to me," quickly replied James, "but to you is the debt owed of which you speak; and I, with the rest, am an equal debtor. Had you not reached forth your hand, and saved me when there was no one to care whether my life were evil or good, I would have been now in all human probability, if alive, a miserable outcast. Ah, sir! there are times when my heart burns with a gratitude that I cannot express; and when I think of you with feelings of unutterable thankfulness. It is to you—to you, that all the happiness we feel this evening must be ascribed!"

"No, not to me, but to the pledge," replied the uncle of Mary. "I only presented the pledge; and that sustained you."

"And not to the pledge," said the minister who had performed the nuptial rite, "must we really ascribe the good that has been done, but to God. Were he not present in every good resolution—the inspirer and sustainer thereof—no pledge could be kept. To God, therefore, let us ascribe the praise. We are humble instruments in his hands, and for every good act we perform, he rewards us amply. In the present instance, how great has been the reward!"

"Unspeakably great it must be!" said the father of Mary. "I can realize, in some sense, the happiness that must fill the

heart of at least one who is here this evening, while he looks around and sees such a harvest as the crowning glory of his labor. May God bless him as he deserves, for it is not in the power of man adequately to reward him!"

A low but fervent "Amen" fell audibly from every lip.

We have no more to add. The "Bottle" has done its work and so has the "Pledge." But, what different work!

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

BRANDY EGG-NOG.

BANG !—Bang!—Bang !—Bang ! "Hur-r-rah !—Hur-r-r-rah ! Hur-r-r-rah ! A merry Christmas to all ! "

It is scarcely peep-o'-day, but open fly the doors, and happy faces and welcome words greet the gay group of young men who have come thus early to tender, in their wild way, the compliments of the season. A table has already been prepared, with a super-abundance of pies and cakes, and in the centre stands a large punch bowl, wreathed with evergreen, full to the brim with a creamy treasure of delicious egg-nog. Near this table are five persons; a man somewhat past the middle age, and a woman of matronly aspect, with their three daughters just on the blossomy verge of young womanhood.

"A merry Christmas ! Mr. Sandford ! " "A merry Christmas to all ! " "Miss Lucy, a merry Christmas ! " "A merry Christmas, Mary and Jane ! " "Ah ! Mrs. Sandford, a merry Christmas, and a hundred happy returns ! " Thus passed round the compliments, for some minutes, mingled with jests and running chit-chat, and such nonsense as happened to come first to the surface and flow over.

Meantime Mr. Sandford had commenced filling a dozen glasses from the inviting punch bowl.

"Come, my boys ! " he said,—"We will now return your salute. Here are our guns, and you will find them all charged. Come, take hold. A merry Christmas to all ! "

A dozen brimming glasses touched as many lips, and were in a moment emptied. Pies and cakes and other good cheer were next

served around to the frolicsome lads who had welcomed the advent of good father Christmas in the old fashioned way, and then their glasses were again filled to the brim with stiff egg-nog, and again emptied.

"First rate, that!" said one of the company, as he set his glass upon the table. "I never tasted better egg-nog.

"Did you ever taste as good, my boy?" returned Mr. Sandford. "I pride myself on my egg-nog."

"No, never," was answered, and then it was voted round that Mr. Sandford made the best egg-nog of any one in the neighborhood. The pies, cakes, doughnuts and crullers of Mrs. Sandford came in also for their share of praise, and they deserved it.

"Now for a song, Charley Graham," said Mr. Sandford, after the second glass of his egg-nog had begun to quicken the pulses of all. "A song and a chorus in which all can join heartily."

Charles Graham, a fine looking young man, who was whispering something into the ear of the smiling Jane Sandford when the old gentleman's invitation reached him, stood forth at once, and after clearing his voice, sang the following, in the chorus of which all united.

OLD CHRISTMAS.

"Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
He cometh to us all with his wealth of good cheer.
Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
The mirth-loving, hearty old fellow is here.

"Fill up the bowl! Let us drink to his coming:
Fill up the bowl with the rosy-red wine:
Fill up the bowl and around its bright surface
The ivy and myrtle and evergreen twine.

"Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
He cometh to all with his wealth of good cheer.
Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
The mirth-loving, hearty old fellow is here.

Merry old Christmas! We hail him with gladness;
We pile up the board and we welcome each friend;
Deep in the heart-warming brimmer we pledge him,
That, true to him now, we'll be true to the end.

"Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
He cometh to all with his wealth of good cheer.
Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
The mirth-loving, hearty old fellow is here.

"Who is afraid to be merry on Christmas?
Who with cold water each heart-throb would chill?
Shame on the catiff who libels the season!—
We, the deep, life-giving beaker will fill.

"Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
He cometh to all with his wealth of good cheer.
Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
The mirth-loving, hearty old fellow is here.

"Come! Let us drink again, deeper than ever.
The gods give us nectar—fill up to the brim!
Old Christmas has come, with his smiles, jokes and laughter;
Fill up the bright cup—we will drink it to him.

"Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
He cometh to all with his wealth of good cheer.
Ho for old Christmas! For merry old Christmas!
The mirth-loving, hearty old fellow is here."

"Hip! hip! Hurrah!" rang through the room, as the last words of the chorus died away.

"Well done, my boy!" said Mr. Sandford. "Right bravely done! It has sent the blood quicker through my veins. True enough! Who, with cold water, each heart-throb would chill? none here, certainly. Let us have another song, Charley."

"After you, Mr. Sandford," returned young Graham. "You have not yet lost your voice."

All joined in Charles Graham's request, that old Mr. Sandford would favor them with a song.

"Well, if I must, I must," said Mr. Sandford, and at once began, but not in such clear and mellow tones as had rung through the room a minute or two before. Years had taken from his voice a good portion of its melody.

A WELCOME.

"A hearty welcome to all, my friends,
A hearty welcome to all;
I pledge you each in the flowing cup,
I pledge you both great and small.
Up to the brim, the generous wine
Comes mantling bright and clear;
So riseth for you, my welcome friends,
My warmest feelings here.

"Old Christmas has come this way again
And the gayest of all is he;
'Tis the merriest time of all the year,
When his smiling face we see,—

We 'll drink to his health in a bumper fair,
We 'll pile up the board with good cheer;
And all who come in the name of friends,
Shall find a welcome here."

"Bravo! Bravo! Bravissimo! Who would have thought there was so much melody in our old friend?"

"Old? Do you call me *old*, Harry Lee?" said Mr. Sandford, straightening himself up. "I am as young as any of you."

"As any of us?" replied the young man. "I did not know before that I was over sixty. Ha! ha!"

"No matter; sixty or not sixty, I can be as merry on Christmas day as any one here. Now Charley, you can come in after me, as you say. Give us another song."

"Yes, Graham, we must have another," ran round the circle. The young man sang, without hesitation. Another and another song were called for and given, and then the glasses were filled once more and emptied.

By this time the sun had thrown his first bright glances upon the frost-fretted windows, warning the visitors that it was time to go.

"A parting salute, boys," said the leader of the company; "the heaviest our guns will bear. Don't spare the powder—let it be full nine fingers deep."

The guns were loaded, and nine fingers was the gauge. The noise they made was more like cannon than guns. The well tried pieces bore this severe test of strength; not, however, without a recoil of sufficient force to lay two or three of the lads upon their backs. A wild hurrah followed, and the merry company retired, somewhat lighter in the head from the potent influences of Mr. Sandford's delicious egg-nog.

Before reaching the house of Mr. Sandford, three morning salutes had been fired by the party which has been briefly introduced, and on each occasion, "hot-stuff," egg-nog, or apple-toddy had flowed freely as water. Two of Mr. Sandford's sons were in the company, and also three young men, who were suitors for the hands of Lucy, Jane and Mary. Nearly all were in the habit of drinking freely, but the deep draughts of the morning were rather more than they could bear.

Our story opens twenty years ago. There are not a few living who remember how Christmas was spent as long ago as twenty

years, especially in villages and country places. Morning guns double-charged, and morning glasses of egg-nog and "hot-stuff," were indispensable attendants upon the advent of the happy day. To get drunk on Christmas was no disgrace—to keep sober, was a matter of wonder.

Mr. Sandford was an intelligent farmer in easy circumstances. He was known as a free liver, and one of the most hospitable men in the country. Every body liked him, both young and old. His side-board was stocked with the best liquors, and these were offered to all who came to his house. From a young man, up to his present age of fifty eight, Mr. Sandford had taken his daily glass of brandy and water. There were two reasons why this habit did not lead to drunkenness in his case. One was, his liquors were of the very best kind—not drugged and poisoned as nearly all sold at the taverns were then, and are now, creating in a very short time a morbid desire for something stimulating. Another and stronger reason was, that Mr. Sandford was a man of great self-control, and pressed forward in his life-pursuits with a purpose that left his appetite but little chance of gaining the mastery over him. He indulged in good eating and drinking; but his ardent mind and active body made his digestion easy, and prevented any ill-effects from becoming apparent. So far as himself was concerned, the drinking of brandy was not a very serious matter; but its free use at home was any thing but good for his sons, who too early in life acquired a taste for stimulating drinks, that was far more frequently gratified than Mr. Sandford supposed. He had two sons and three daughters. The sons were eighteen and twenty-three at the time of which we are now writing. The elder, named William, had studied medicine, and had been practising in the neighborhood for about a year James, the younger, showed more inclination to become a farmer, which inclination was encouraged by his father. Both were young men of good principles, and favorites with all who knew them; but their ardent temperaments, social feelings, and fondness for good eating and drinking, and an occasional frolic, made their position a dangerous one.

Lucy was older than William by rather more than a year. The oldest, she was the most thoughtful of all the children, and, to her mother more like a friend and a companion than a child. Jane was a mild creature, and very beautiful, just entering her

twentieth year. The soft tints of the rose were not more delicate than the bloom upon her cheeks; nor were the birds that sung around the dwelling more graceful in their movements, or sweeter in the melody of voice and song, than Jane Sandford. All loved her. From a child up, she had been the darling of all and the pride of all in the house. Petted, indulged and caressed from the first, Jane could not help being a little spoiled and wayward. But there was so much of good about her; so much to win the love and regard of every one, that minor foibles were seen but a moment and quickly forgotten. Charles Graham was her accepted lover, and approved of all. Mr. Sandford was much attached to the young man, and felt almost as tender a regard for him as he did for his own children. The youngest of all was Mary, a gentle, quiet girl, fond of being alone, and in communion with her own thoughts. The face of Jane was ever wreathed in a succession of smiles. Every feature seemed to smile;—brows, eyes, lips, chin and even the very ringlets that danced about her sunny face,—while Mary smiled but seldom; but once seen, you never forgot the sweetness of her smile; it was like a living sunbeam. Those who knew Mary best, liked her best; few, however, beyond her own family, were very intimate with her, for she neither attracted nor was attracted very strongly on first meeting with any one.

The mother of these children was a woman of some decision of mind and strength of character, who governed in her family with kindness and judgment. She had great confidence in her husband, and never felt called upon to question the right or propriety of anything that he approved. If she had suffered herself to reflect upon the consequences likely to occur from a free use of wines and other liquors among the children, she would have seen the danger that was incurred, and have opposed its introduction as a beverage on all occasions. A few times William, the Doctor, had come home from a dinner party, or from a visit to a friend's more than half intoxicated. These occurrences distressed, more than they mortified Mrs. Sandford. They filled her with a vague apprehension of something she had not the courage to picture to her mind distinctly. Feelings such as these did not haunt her, however, very often, or very long at a time. All that met her eye was too fair, and the future promise for her children too bright, to permit her long to be troubled with imaginary fears.

Like the rest, Mrs. Sandford had entered heartily into the festive joys of Christmas morning; still, she could not help wishing that the three young men who had claimed her daughters' hands, and her two sons, had shown fewer evidences of having drunk too freely. She was not entirely alone in this; Lucy also noticed, and with, perhaps, a clearer perception of danger than her mother, the condition of intoxication towards which the young men were verging.

The reason why Lucy's eyes were more opened than the rest, arose from this cause. The old temperance reformation, as it is sometimes called, had begun to make some slight advances, and to obtain a few advocates here and there whose warning voices were heard, at times, by one and another whose ears were unstopped sufficiently to hear. The brother of one of Lucy's young friends had become a temperance advocate, and some of his arguments in support of the cause had reached her ears through the din of ridicule that was cast upon the movement. These arrested her attention, and caused her to reflect—not very deeply, it is true, but enough to make her regard the too free and frequent use of liquors with uneasiness.

Lucy was under an engagement of marriage, and had been for over a year, with a young man of good family, named Watson, who owned a mill about a mile from where her father resided. From some cause or other, the marriage, which the young man desired to have celebrated, was delayed. The fault, it was believed, was Lucy's. But the real cause, if any of moment existed, was not known. Watson was a constant visitor at Mr. Sandford's, and a very welcome one to all:—and he and Lucy were upon the best terms. Thus matters stood at the time our story opens. Enough has now been said to enable the reader to understand all that follows.

The Christmas dinner at Mr. Sandford's was always a matter of importance; and none the less so on this occasion, from the fact that the lovers of Lucy, Jane, and Mary, were to be added to the family circle. All the morning was spent in busy preparation. It was after one o'clock before the girls could retire to their chamber to dress.

"Oh dear!" exclaimed Jane, throwing herself across a bed, "I am almost tired to death. It is well that Christmas comes only once in the year. But I must n't lie here. We are to dine

at two, and it will take me till then to dress. I hope our company have got father's egg-nog out of their heads by this time."

"It will be as much as the bargain," said Mary, quietly. "It was of double strength, and they all drank a double quantity."

"I wonder what good it does them?" remarked Lucy.

"Who but you would ever have thought of asking such a question?" laughingly returned Jane. "It tastes good, and makes them feel happy"

"How do you know, sis?"

"Do you think I have never taken a glass of egg-nog?"

"It tasted good, and made you feel happy, did it?"

"It is not at all bad to take, as brother William says. For my part, I do n't wonder they all like it. I think egg-nog delicious. I drank so much this morning, that my head has felt more like a half bushel than a head ever since."

"A most delightful sensation, no doubt. That is what you call feeling happy, I suppose," retorted Lucy.

"Not that, exactly," said Jane, laughing. "But I did feel as happy as a lark for half an hour after I had turned off my glass."

"Turned off! For mercy sake! sister, do n't say 'turned off' again."

"Why not?"

"It smacks too much of the bar-room for a lady's lips. And so your delightful feelings lasted only about thirty minutes, and after that your head felt like a half bushel measure, and, no doubt, ached a little?"

"Not much."

"But still, it ached."

"A very little."

"If your head ached a very little, and felt like a half bushel measure after drinking one glass of egg-nog, how must the heads of the young men who gave us our morning salute feel? As large as molasses' hogsheads, I should say."

"I am sure I cannot tell how they feel now. There is no doubt that they were happy enough this morning. As I said before, I hope they have got the egg-nog out of their heads by this time. We have got a splendid dinner, and want them to enjoy it."

"If they have got it out of their heads," said Mary, "they will get it in again, for I saw father making another bowl full as I passed through the dining-room."

"Indeed!" ejaculated Lucy, in a tone that did not express pleasure at the intelligence.

"Certainly! Why not, sister?" spoke up Jane. "Did you suppose we were going to have a Christmas dinner, and not sharpen the appetites of the company with a bowl of egg-nog? You have forgotten the time-honored custom of our house."

"A custom more honored in the breach than in the observance, I am half inclined to think."

"For shame, Lucy! What would father say if he were to hear you talk so?"

"He would think strange, no doubt. And perhaps I am a little foolish. But the fact is, sis, it somehow or other goes against me to see sensible men pour so much liquor down their throats as to make—what shall I say?—fools of themselves? That is a pretty hard speech, I must own; but is it not true? For my life, when I see such things in those I esteem and love, I cannot help thinking of poor Frank Carlton, who has become a miserable sot. I can remember well enough when he was as fine a young man as is to be found any where."

"The more shame and disgrace to him, say I," returned Jane. "A poor weak creature he must be, not to be able to enjoy a pleasant glass with his friends, now and then, without becoming a drunkard. I should think it no compliment to those I esteem and love to associate them in my mind with Frank Carlton."

Jane spoke warmly, and Lucy, feeling that she had said enough, and more than she had intended to say, did not reply.

"If we spend the time in talking, we shall not be dressed for dinner," Mary remarked, on perceiving Lucy's disinclination to say any thing more on the subject.

"True enough!" returned Jane. "Hark! They are setting the table now."

As rapidly as was consistent with order and neatness, the sisters proceeded in their work of dressing for dinner. The company had arrived, and been served with a stiff bumper of egg-nog to whet their appetites, before the young ladies descended to the parlor. Charles Graham, the betrothed of Jane, was there, and also Edward Pryor, who had won the heart of the quiet, thought-

ful Mary. But the eye of Lucy sought for the form of Henry Watson in vain.

"Where is Harry?" asked old Mr. Sandford, soon after the girls came down.

A laugh went round the room at this question: it arose from such of the company as had helped to give the morning salute.

"Why do you laugh, boys? Where is he?" said Mr. Sandford.

"Your egg-nog was too strong for him!" replied Graham.

"What?"

"The parting glass used him up."

"He is not sick, I hope?"

"You can call it sick. He is in bed, and has been there since morning. I called to see him as I came along, and asked him if he would come; but he said his head felt as big as a molasses' hogshead and would surely strike the floor as quick as his feet, if he attempted to rise from the bed. Ha! ha!"

"Oh! that will never do. I thought Harry could stand as much as any of you. But I'll take care to provide a weaker glass for him next time."

A chill passed to the heart of Lucy as she listened to this conversation, and it was with difficulty that she could control her feelings sufficiently to appear indifferent, particularly as almost every eye in the room was turned upon her. Some one sitting by her side made a jesting remark to her about the condition in which Watson was reported to be lying; but she could not reply to it. It was a subject on which she was not prepared to jest.

Dinner was soon after announced, and the company gathered around the well-filled table; and it so happened that Jane sat by the side of Charles Graham, and Mary by the side of Edward Pryor. This made the absence of Watson still more apparent and annoying to Lucy, who was the only one who did not enjoy the luxurious repast at which wine and wit flowed more freely than water.

Henry Watson was a young man highly esteemed by all. He was deeply attached to Lucy Sandford, and had promised himself much pleasure in taking his Christmas dinner with her. But a glass too much had robbed him of this pleasure, and cast a shadow upon the heart of her he loved. After Charles Graham, who called on his way to the house of Mr. Sandford, had left him, the

young man arose from the bed upon which he had thrown himself, and staggered, as best he could, to the wash-stand, for the purpose of bathing his head and face, in the hope that cold water freely applied would enable him to throw off the stupor caused by his too early and too liberal potations. The effect desired was obtained to some extent; his head felt clearer and he could walk more steadily. The ablution was repeated again and again, and each time with decided benefit. The juice of a lemon helped on the work of restoration. At the end of ten minutes, Watson felt so much better that he began to think about the Christmas dinner at Mr. Sandford's and of his engagement to make one of the party. Without reflecting that it was already the hour for dining —he was not in a state to think very clearly on any subject—he commenced dressing himself for the occasion. As his beard had not been removed since the preceding day, it was necessary to shave. In performing this operation, his unsteady hand drew the blood in over half a dozen places—as a styptic he used patches of fur from his black hat. There were three cuts upon his chin, one on each cheek, and two or three about his throat. The fur was applied clumsily enough, and in several places was not entirely effectual in stopping the flow of blood. This fact his eyes were not sufficiently clear to detect, although he consulted the glass very frequently. Finally, the work of dressing was completed, and in the full belief that no one could discover, from his appearance, the fact that he had been drinking too freely, Watson sallied forth for the purpose of joining the dinner party at the house of his intended father-in-law.

Meantime, the dinner had progressed as far as the dessert, and the young man's absence had been forgotten by all but Lucy, who could think of nothing else. During the dessert a young man opposite to Lucy proposed taking a glass of wine with her. The compliment was accepted. Lucy had smiled and bowed, and was just raising the glass to her lips, when the door opposite to which she was sitting, was suddenly thrown open, and her lover entered the room. The glass fell from her hand, and broke in her plate with a sharp, quick crash that startled every one at the table, and drew all eyes upon her. Her fixed, painful look of surprise, that was directed towards the door, turned the general attention upon the object that seemed for a moment to have paralyzed her. No wonder that the sudden appearance of Watson

had produced this effect. His face was red, and disfigured with large, irregular patches of fur, from two of which patches, one on his chin and the other on his cheek, streams of blood had flowed down and dropped upon his shirt collar. In dressing himself, he had forgotten to comb or brush his hair, which stood out from his head in some parts, and lay close to it in others, in irregular masses.

The momentary silent surprise occasioned by his sudden appearance was followed by loud shouts and laughter.

"What in the world has kept you so late, Harry?" said Mr. Sandford, after the young man had taken a vacant seat at the table.

"Do not ask him that! Look at him, ha! ha!" burst from the lips of Charles Graham. "It's all your fault, Mr. Sandford."

"My fault?"

"Yes. That egg-nog was too much for him. *Your* morning gun knocked him over. But he can't complain; you warned him that it was well charged."

"Better men than he have fallen under a shot from my guns," replied Mr. Sandford. "I am glad to see he has so soon recovered himself. Here, Thomas," (to the waiter) bring back the meats and help Mr. Watson; in the meantime let us drink his health."

The wine passed around the table, the glasses were all filled, and a sentiment was proposed—"Our friend Watson—better luck next time." A single glass remained standing in its place, unemptied. It was the glass of Lucy Sandford. Young Graham noticed this, and was about remarking on it, when he observed that tears were in Lucy's eyes, and forbore. Another of the company, not so considerate, cried out—

"Miss Sandford! Is it possible you can't drink to that?"

Poor Lucy's feelings, for some time scarcely within her control, could be restrained no longer. The tears gushed over her cheeks, and she arose in confusion and retired from the table. There was a dead silence for nearly half a minute. The whole company was disturbed. Watson, whom cold water, lemon juice, etc., had partly sobered, was made clearly sensible by the sudden and unexpected withdrawal of Lucy, that his appearance and condition had affected her unfavorably, arose, likewise, from the table, and hurried without a word of apology, from the house.

Mr. Sandford loved his children tenderly,—whatever pained them, gave him pain. The withdrawal of Lucy under such circumstances, and evidently much disturbed, threw a damper over his feelings and took away his power to entertain his company with the freedom, vivacity and hearty good will for which he was distinguished. The sisters, too, were disturbed; in fact, there was not one present whose spirits were not in some measure depressed by what had occurred in spite of the elevating influences of the wine they had been drinking. The consequence was, that the dessert was finished in silence, and the party arose from the table half an hour earlier than would have been the case had not the unlooked-for incidents occurred.

The feelings of Lucy were so well understood that no one ventured to say any thing to her on the subject of her withdrawal from the table. Watson's appearance was considered enough to shock her severely and to produce all the pain of mind she exhibited.

After dinner, first one and then another of the company withdrew until, at length, only Mr. and Mrs. Sandford and the daughters were left at home.

Mr. Sandford took a long afternoon nap; — Mrs. Sandford found enough to occupy her attention during the time that elapsed before the hour for tea, in seeing that her silver and other choice articles used on the dinner table were returned to their various appropriate places of deposit, and the girls read, sewed or slept as best suited their fancies or peculiar states of mind.

When the tea bell rung and the family assembled for the evening meal, only Jane and Mary appeared at the table.

"Where is Lucy?" asked the mother.

"She does not want any tea," replied Jane.

"Why?"

"She says that she does n't feel very well."

"What is the matter?"

"I believe her head aches a little."

Mrs. Sanford sighed, and the sigh was unconsciously responded by her husband.

Mr. Watson had no right to come here in the condition he was in," Mrs. Sandford remarked, after all had sat silent for some minutes.

"I do n't suppose he knew what he was doing;" replied her husband.

"Perhaps not. But it is really disgraceful for a young man to indulge as freely as he has done to-day. There is no excuse for it."

"I am not so sure of that. The day itself is some excuse."

"Some excuse to drink more freely than usual, but not to get drunk," returned Mrs. Sandford. "For that, no time nor season is an excuse. You never made it so."

"True, but every one has not the self-control that I have; nor can every one drink as much without being affected."

"Is it not, then, somewhat dangerous for all who have not your self-control to indulge very freely in drinking?"

"It may be for some. But I don't see that the fact of a young man's getting his heels tripped now and then is a matter of much consequence."

"Some young men become drunkards."

"Not one in twenty. The cases are very rare."

"Still, they do occur, and there is no telling who is the one that will next fall."

"True."

Mr. Sandford sighed. The image of William his oldest son, came up before him. William had indulged himself during the morning almost as freely as Watson, and had appeared at the dinner table scarcely more sober. Two or three times during the past year he had got on what is called a frolic, and neglected his patients for several days on each occasion. This had already caused Mr. Sandford some uneasiness, and had led him to warn his son against permitting himself to drink more freely than he was able to bear.

"It has occurred to me more than once, to-day," said Mrs. Sandford, in a musing tone, "that getting half intoxicated is rather a strange way of keeping Christmas. No one feels any better for it, afterwards."

"No one feels any better for eating too much mince pie and turkey, but, on a day like Christmas, it is hard to keep to the golden mean. It is the same in drinking, only, still harder to know when to stop. You would n't banish good liquors altogether!"

"Oh no!"

"Then I do not see how some trifling excesses are to be prevented, when there is so much to tempt the appetite."

"I suppose it is hard for young men, encouraged on by one another, to keep from indulging too freely on a day like this; but if it stops there, I don't know that any great harm is done, although, to my eyes, the sight of a man who has been drinking more than he can bear, is a disgusting one. In fact, spite of all I can do, I never feel the same afterwards to any one that I have seen partially intoxicated.

"If that is the case, you will never feel the same again towards at least half a dozen I could mention, who had the honor of dining with us to-day," said Jane, smiling.

"Perhaps I never shall," the mother gravely replied. "It is very certain, that more than one young man has fallen in my estimation, never, I fear, to rise to the high place he once occupied."

"Why in your estimation?" said Mr. Sandford. "A glass too much, on a day like this, does not affect a man's principles."

"Although it may show him not to possess that manly strength of character which we all so much admire, and thus affect the estimation in which we had held him?"

"If all judged with your severity, I am afraid that few young men would stand very high in the general regard."

"Perhaps if all expressed what I do, and which *all must feel*, young men would be more guarded."

"Why do you say that *all* must feel this?'

"I do not believe that any man ever appeared among his friends in a state of partial intoxication, without falling in their estimation. This effect follows as a natural consequence, and comes without reflection. And when we think about it, we shall not be surprised that it is so."

"Perhaps you are right," said Mr. Sandford. "I can but own, that the fine edge of my respect for a man is taken off when I see him in liquor. It is a betrayal of his weakness. *It shows him to be that much less a man.*"

Jane and Mary listened in silence to these remarks. The former could not help remembering that Charles Graham had appeared less like himself at dinner time, than she had ever seen him. The expression of his face, so changed from its usual aspect, she had not been able to get out of her mind all the afternoon. Until now, she had not asked herself the reason of this change. As her mother had declared, a measure of respect for her lover had been taken from her feelings; and she had been inwardly troubled on this account.

A thoughtful silence succeeded to what Mr. Sandford nad said. At length Mrs. Sandford remarked, half in jest, and half in earnest—

"Really, these things cause me to be more than half in favor of the ultra-temperance movements that begin to disturb society."

"It does no good to go from one extreme to another," returned her husband.

"Still it is a question as to which extreme is the worst?"

"Yes, I suppose it is. But how are we to decide that? Some men eat to excess, and destroy their health by becoming gluttons. Because this is so, shall we all do without eating, for fear of being tempted to indulge in like manner? It would, certainly, be nicer to enjoy our meals temperately, and to warn all who are in the habit of eating too much, of the dangers of their course. And I think the same is true of drinking. Because my neighbor gets intoxicated, shall I be deprived of a generous glass of wine or brandy? I see nothing right or just in this."

"And I suppose there is nothing right or just in it. But drinking to excess is a great evil."

"The closing up of a merry Christmas day, does not seem to find you in as good a state of mind as usual," said Mr. Sandford. "I remember that we had several friends to tea with us last year, and that you enjoyed a fine flow of spirits."

"I believe," she replied, "that I never enjoyed a Christmas less than I have done this one. Last year we had a large dinner party, and I was a good deal fatigued; but I was happy the whole day. In fact, Christmas I have always enjoyed."

"So have I; but, like you, I must own that the day's decline does not bring the pleasant state usual to me on these occasions."

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Sandford.

"Your remarks have made me notice the fact; I have not yet considered the cause."

"There must be a cause."

"Oh! of course. Every effect has a cause. And how is it with you, girls?" the father looked at Jane and Mary and smiled.

"As for me," promptly returned Jane, "I can't say that I feel particularly bright, or very dull. I promised myself a good

deal of pleasure to-day, and when we do that we are frequently disappointed. Everything has not gone off exactly as I could wish."

"What has been wrong?"

"I think it was very wrong for Mr. Watson to come here as he did. He should have had wit enough at least to have staid at home."

"You know the adage, Jane," said Mary, smiling. "When wine is in, the wits are out."

"But he had no business to pour in wine enough to drown his wits out," returned Jane, speaking with warmth.

"There you are right," said Mr. Sandford. "He had no business to drink to excess."

"To this drinking to excess, then, if I am not mistaken," remarked Mrs. Sandford, "we may trace the cause of our dullness this evening."

"Indeed!" said Jane, laughing. "Why mother, I did not know before that you had been taking too much."

"Nonsense! child," returned Mrs. Sandford, good-humoredly. "But it may be all true as you suggest. That glass of your father's egg-nog that I was almost forced to drink this morning, has been in my head ever since."

"Father's egg-nog is delicious enough and tempting enough," said Jane, "but it is very apt to stay a good while in the head. I don't think mine is going to be very clear before to-morrow morning."

"Women are too weak-headed for egg-nog," retorted Mr. Sandford, smiling.

"And some men, too," said Mary, in her quiet way. "I believe more than half of our dinner party were more than half drunk."

"Edward Pryor, not excepted," said Jane, glancing mischievously at her sister.

The color flew to Mary's face. "I beg pardon!" she returned quickly,—"Edward Pryor was perfectly sober."

"Oh, I forgot," said the merry-hearted girl, "he has joined the Temperance Society.

This playful retort annoyed Mary. Pryor, the young man who was her acknowledged lover, had but little taste for drinking and frolicking, although *not* a member of any Temperance

Society. When in company where wine or brandy was introduced, he always drank with the rest, but did not care enough for it to visit the tavern in order to gratify his taste. In fact, he looked upon the visiting at drinking houses as no credit to a young man. Mary replied to her sister's ironical remark by saying—

"If he even thinks it right to join a Temperance Society, I shall never object."

"Won't you indeed?" said her father, speaking in a tone of surprise.

"No, father," answered the gentle girl. "Temperance is a cardinal virtue. Few men give pain to their friends when perfectly sober; but the kindest-hearted may become brutal and cruel, under the influence of liquors."

"But there can be temperance without total abstinence, Mary."

"So it is said. But, for me, I must confess that I should feel safest from danger under the total abstinence system."

"But why deprive ourselves of the enjoyment of drinking good liquor, when we may do so, moderately, and without danger? I believe that our health requires us to use wine or brandy at least once a day."

"It may be so," replied Mary; "but you know, father, that we girls do n't drink wine or brandy as often as once a month, and I am sure we are in good health. And I do n't believe mother touches them once in three months."

Mr. Sandford hardly knew how to reply to this. It bore too strongly on the position he had assumed. He was about making some kind of an answer, when a visitor was announced, and they all arose from the tea table and went into the parlor.

The visitor was an old friend of Mr. Sandford's, named Jewett. He came in to chat an hour.

"Is 'nt there a glass of that egg-nog left, Jane?" said Mr. Sandford, as soon as he had welcomed his friend.

"I 'll see, father," and Jane was about leaving the room, when Mr. Jewett said—

"No—no, I thank you Mr. Sandford; please excuse me, I do n't care about drinking anything."

"Do n't care about drinking a glass of egg-nog with me on Christmas!" exclaimed Mr. Sandford, in surprise. "Why,

man, what has come over you? I would just as soon think of not offering you my hand. Go, Jane, and bring in a couple of glasses; you must drink with me."

"Indeed you must excuse me,—I—I—I—"

"I, what, man? Are you sick?"

"No."

"Have you been drinking so much already as to be afraid of another glass."

"No—I have n't tasted anything stronger than tea or coffee to-day."

"The deuce you have n't!"

"No, nothing stronger."

Mr. Sandford looked at his friend with surprise. It was sometime before he could comprehend the meaning of what was said. A thought flashed across his mind, and he said, smiling—

"Has Saul been among the prophets?"

"What do you mean?"

"It is n't possible that *you* have been caught by these temperance men?"

"I have espoused temperance principles."

"You?"

"Yes, I am one of the number who have renounced all alcoholic drinks as a beverage."

"Then you are not a tee-totaller?"

"No; they are the temperance new lights. I only renounce distilled liquors."

"Jane," said Mr. Sandford, "never mind the egg-nog. A bottle of wine will do. Bring in the wine."

To this the visitor made no objection. The wine was brought, and he took a glass with his old friend, and enjoyed it.

"A temperance man! Well, I declare, Jewett," said Mr. Sandford, after the glasses had been emptied, "this is something of which I should never have dreamed. What under the sun has induced you to join these folks? I thought you a man of more sense."

"Do you think joining a temperance society indicative of a want of sense?"

"I do."

"Then you and I differ very widely."

"But you were not in danger of becoming a drunkard."

"Every man who drinks brandy, habitually, is in that danger."

"Then I must be in danger, for I drink brandy every day. But if any man were to tell me so, I should consider myself insulted."

"An insult is always given with intent," remarked Mr. Jewett in reply. "Now, as I do not intend to insult you, you cannot receive as an insult my reply that I do think you or any other man who drinks brandy habitually, in danger of becoming a drunkard."

"What in the world has come over you, Jewett? What has put this crotchet into your head?"

"The fact is, Sandford," replied the friend, "I have long thought the habit of using intoxicating drinks as a beverage, a useless and dangerous one. I do not believe the human system needs habitual stimulants; but think, on the contrary, that all stimulants, regularly used, are injurious. Of late, I have read a good deal on the subject, and attended many temperance lectures; and my mind is fully made up that for me there is but one right course, and I have taken that course, deliberately."

"Well, it is surprising," said Mr. Sandford. "I, for one, cannot see why it is necessary to join a temperance society, and totally abstain from all spirituous liquors, in order to lead a temperate life. If you think brandy injures you, why, abstain from it, in the name of all that is good! But you need n't go and connect yourself with a canting set of pseudo-reformers, whose only aim is to get some kind of notoriety, little caring what it may be. This temperance question is a capital hobby upon which these persons can ride into notice."

"I rather think, from what you say," remarked Mr. Jewett, "that you have never looked at the affirmative side of the question. To do it justice, you must hear something from its friends as well as its enemies."

"Well, you are one of its friends, what have you to say in its favor?"

"I could say a great deal, if I thought it would do any good; but of this I have my doubts."

"Do n't be so sure of that. You might make a convert of me," said Mr. Sandford, jestingly.

"I should be very happy to do so, but of this I have no ex-

pectation. So far as you are concerned, I suppose there are few men who drink as freely, that are in less danger."

"And therefore the less necessity for my joining a temperance society."

"For your own sake, the necessity is not so great as it is in the case of a very large number. But when your influence upon others is considered, the aspect of the question changes materially."

"Why do you say that?"

"You can drink with little danger of becoming the slave of an inordinate appetite; but it is not so certain that all who are encouraged by you to drink, will be in as safe a condition. Your influence, as a man in society, if exerted in the cause of temperance, would be as salutary as wide-spreading; the same cannot be said of that influence if thrown on the other side of the question—the danger is, that it will be exceedingly hurtful, and that when it is too late to recall the past, you will mourn the consequences with unavailing regret."

"Your words sound strangely in my ears, friend Jewett," said Mr. Sandford. "I do n't understand them."

"I mean," was the reply, "that very few young men in the present day, can drink habitually without being in great danger of falling. This being so, it is of the first importance that they be made conscious of the fact, in order that they may avoid the impending danger. You have it in your power to influence very many young men either to continue drinking or to abandon it."

"I have?"

"Certainly, you have. I saw three young men to-day, personal acquaintances, very much intoxicated. They belong to good families, and are esteemed by all who know them. To one I said—'This is not right, my young friend; you hurt yourself, and mortify and wound the feelings of your friends.' 'Do n't blame *me*,' he replied—and I thought with some bitterness—'Blame old Mr. Sandford's egg-nog!'"

"What! Who said that?" asked Mr. Sandford, speaking quickly.

"A young man for whom I understand you have a strong regard. He was in a condition that I call disgraceful for any one. In attempting to shave himself he had cut his face badly in several places, and these were covered with large patches of fur

from a black hat, giving him a ludicrous appearance. I found him sitting in front of Maxwell's tavern, nodding in his chair."

"Is he there now?" asked Mr. Sandford, half rising as he spoke, and seeming quite disturbed.

"No, I induced him to go home, and I hope he is now safe in his own room and sound asleep."

Mr. Sandford sunk back in his chair, and cast his eyes thoughtfully to the floor. While he sat musing, Mr. Jewett resumed.

"To another of the three young men, who was just getting into a quarrel with a man about as drunk as himself when I came by and prevented the dernier resort of blows, I said, 'There are better ways than this to celebrate Christmas; I am sorry you did not choose one more creditable to yourself.' 'Go and talk to Mr. Sandford,' he replied, 'he made me drunk.' 'How could he make you drunk?' I asked. 'By double charging his egg-nog, and making me drink a double quantity,' he answered."

"You are trumping up a good story, friend Jewett," said Mr. Sandford, trying to laugh with affected indifference.

"Heaven knows I am not!" replied his visitor. "What I say is the solemn truth. I had not gone far, after this, when I met a man leading another young friend, who was not able to walk straight, from having been drinking too freely. I asked some questions about him, and was answered by one of a group of two or three who were making themselves merry at his unfortunate condition, that he had been dining at Mr. Sandford's, and partaken too freely of his good wine."

"If that is the way my hospitality is returned," said the old gentleman, with a good deal of warmth, "I will take good care how I repeat my invitations to certain individuals on another such occasion. Why should I be blamed because a young man, who is weak enough to get drunk, happens to take one of the glasses at my house which helps to knock him over. He would have got drunk any how. But I will know better next time."

"I sincerely hope you will, friend Sandford, and when Christmas comes round again with his cheerful face, that you will be prepared to give him a hearty temperance welcome."

"I shall be prepared to pledge him, as I have not once failed to do in the last thirty years, in a stiff bowl of egg-nog."

"No matter what may be the consequences to others?"

"For other men's weaknesses and follies, I am not responsi-

ble. If a man gets drunk from drinking my liquors, it is his fault, not mine. Am I to refrain from tendering the hospitalities of my house, for fear that some one will abuse them?"

"To be hospitable, is to be kind to, and considerate of the welfare of those who visit us. If this be a correct definition, then I do not think it is true hospitality to place temptations in the way of our friends."

To find a perfectly satisfactory answer to this form of argument was not a very easy matter for Mr. Sandford, and he, therefore, met it by saying—

"Upon my word, Jewett! you have got your lesson well, and would no doubt make quite an impression as a temperance lecturer. But it won't do here. I am too old a bird to be caught by that kind of chaff. I have always had a good glass of liquor for my friends, come when they may, and I hope to have it as long as I live."

"No matter what may be the consequences to them."

"As for consequences, let every man take care of himself; that is his own business. How am I to tell whether a man is in danger or not? Shall I first say to my friend, before asking him to take a social glass—'Are you in danger of drinking too much?' Humph! Would n't that sound well? No — no. Good liquor is good for all who will use it temperately. If any abuse it, to them be the consequence, and on them rest the responsibility. If I ever turn out a drunkard, be assured that I shall not blame you or any one else. It will be my own fault and mine alone. But come, let us change the subject, it is too personal and condemnatory, and tends to interrupt the harmony of intercourse which I always like to have with an old friend. Let me fill your glass again. This wine is delicious. I have had it in my cellar for ten years."

"It certainly is very fine," said Mr. Jewett, raising his glass to his lips, and sipping it with the air of a connoisseur. "Pardon me for saying, that wine like this is in bad company when placed beside a bottle of brandy."

"Why so?"

"Wine is only a fermented liquor, like beer or cider. But brandy is distilled, and contains the alcoholic principle in a highly condensed and active form. Its effects upon the stomach, like all other distilled liquors, is deleterious, and the continued

use of it tends to weaken man's control over himself, while it makes his appetite for stimulating drinks inordinate."

"A man can get drunk on wine or beer, as well as upon rum, or gin, or brandy; and what is more, men do get drunk on fermented liquors, and they are known to be the lowest and worst class of drunkards."

"The cases are extremely rare, and I am sure it will be found that distilled liquors wrought the downfall at first. Wine is generous and nourishing, and so is good beer;—it takes a large quantity to produce intoxication; much more than any one feels inclined too take."

"Drink your wine and beer, friend Jewett, and I will continue to take my glass of brandy when I feel inclined to do so; the argument for its use seems to me to be quite as good as for the use of the other. Next Christmas I will have to manage things differently, I suppose, as by that time at least half of my friends will have joined the Temperance Society. I will have a glass of egg-nog for you then that you will not refuse."

"I have taken my last glass of the villainous compound," replied Jewett.

"Come! come! Do n't abuse good egg-nog in that way. You will drink it with me on next Christmas, if we are both alive and well."

"No, sir!"

"You will, if you hold to your present views.

"I will not, if I hold to my present views."

"Do n't be too positive. Next Christmas I shall have a bowl of *wine* egg-nog for my Temperance friends, and *brandy* egg-nog for all who prefer something stronger. Won't you drink with me, then, to merry Christmas?"

"Oh! Ah! That alters the question. *Wine* egg-nog, did you say?"

"Yes, and it 's not bad, let me tell you."

"No, I should think not. *Wine* egg-nog! That is something new under the sun."

"Next Christmas you shall test its quality; and you may bring a whole temperance society along to help enjoy the joke. If I do n't make you all drunk, it won't be my fault."

"Do n't flatter yourself. You will not find that such a very easy matter."

"We shall see!" replied Mr. Sandford.

From this point the subject gradually changed, and matters of more general interest engrossed the attention of the two old friends.

Mrs. Sanford had listened in silence to this conversation. Some things that were said, coming as they did while the incidents of the day were fresh in her mind, caused new light to break in upon her. She could not think with her husband, that we should be altogether indifferent about the weaknesses of others, or careless whether we placed temptations in their way or not. Until this time, she had felt contempt for all temperance people, but now an involuntary respect for their principles took possession of her mind. The object in view was, evidently, the good of others. Mary's views were already on the side of temperance. But Jane thought and felt with her father, and saw much more force in what he said than he really saw himself.

Thus matters stood at the close of Christmas day. Not a single member of Mr. Sandford's family was as happy as in the morning, nor had realized one half the enjoyment that smiled so pleasantly in anticipation.

When Lucy Sanford retired from the dinner table, overcome by her feelings at seeing the revolting condition of her lover, she went to her chamber and wept there for some time bitterly. This was not the first time she had seen Watson under the influence of liquor. Its occurrence always gave her pain,—not that there was in her mind a distinct fear that he would ever become a drunkard; but the condition itself, in one she loved, shocked and pained her. She had been under an engagement of marriage with Watson for over a year; during that time he had frequently urged her to name a day for their union to take place, but she had not as yet done so. The only reason she had was an unconquerable disinclination to get married, growing out of the fact, that seeing Watson slightly intoxicated on two or three occasions, had produced an inward repugnance towards becoming his wife. The sacredness of her marriage contract, whenever she thought about it, caused her to strive with herself to conquer this repugnance.

Three or four months had elapsed since Watson had appeared in Lucy's presence at all under the influence of drink, and during that time, the feeling just alluded to had grown weaker and

weaker. She had almost made up her mind to name an early day for their marriage, when he again pressed her on the subject. Christmas was a holiday occasion, and on that day she had expected to be a good deal with her lover. The thought had crossed her mind that he would, in all probability, again urge her to appoint the time for their marriage to take place ; and she felt much more than half inclined to meet his wishes.

This was her state of mind, when her heart was chilled by the jests that passed around the dinner party, on the condition in which Watson was said to be lying at home, and then deeply distressed by his sudden appearance. When she left the table, unable longer to control herself, it was with the solemn internal conviction, that she could never become his wife.

For a woman of a calm, thoughtful, loving disposition, such as Lucy Sandford possessed, to be forced to a conclusion like this is no trifling matter. She did not lightly bestow her affections upon Henry Watson ; but, when she did do so, she loved him earnestly, fondly and confidingly. Like a chill wind over a pure spring blossom, just opening itself to the pleasant sunshine, came the first impression made upon her heart by seeing him, shortly after their engagement, so much intoxicated as to act and talk very foolishly, and make himself a mark of ridicule to others, who jested with him in a way to wound her deeply. It was no idea of consequences that produced this revulsion in her feelings ; she had no fear of his becoming a drunkard. No, it was not that. To love a man truly, she must respect and honor him in every act and condition ;—but she could not do so in this instance. There was something in his manner and appearance from which her whole soul revolted. From that moment he was not the same to her, although she still loved him, and still hoped to become his wife at some day ; but she could not give her own consent to name that day.

During the afternoon of Christmas day, she endeavored to hide from her sisters as much as possible the pain she was suffering. Jane, on leaving the dinner-table, joined her in their chamber, where she had retired, and commenced jesting about Watson's ludicrous appearance, and her weakness in taking it much to heart. She, however, quickly saw that Lucy was in no state of mind to bear jesting, and forbore her light speeches on a subject that appeared to give her sister, as she thought, unnecessary pain. In

order to hide from observation, as much as possible, the deeply disturbed state of mind produced by the incidents of the dinner-table, Lucy read, or rather permitted her eyes to run over the pages of a book, for the most part of the afternoon, while Mary occupied herself in some fancy needle-work, and Jane slept off the two or three glasses of wine she had taken at dinner.

Mrs. Sandford had been so much engaged during the afternoon, as not to have found time to see and talk with Lucy, although she was on her mind all the while. During the time that her husband was engaged in conversation with Mr. Jewett, after the subject of temperance had been waived, she spent with her daughter, alone. She found her, on going up, quietly, into her chamber, sitting by the bed, her face buried in a pillow.

"Lucy, dear," she said, tenderly, laying her hand upon her as she spoke, "are you not taking the little occurrence of to-day too much to heart?"

The whole subject of her relation to Watson had been passing through her mind, and she had again come to the distinct conclusion that she could never become his wife. This was not arrived at without a powerful struggle with herself. Her heart was full, full just to overflowing, and the words of her mother, and the tender pressure of her hand, made her feelings gush forth into weeping.

"It was but a trifling occurrence," said Mrs. Sandford, after Lucy had recovered some little control of herself. "The day must excuse it. He was not the only one who was tempted to go into too deep waters."

Lucy heard what her mother said, and answered only by a long, quivering sigh.

"Is the fact that Mr. Watson came here to-day in so sad a plight your only cause of unhappiness?" asked Mrs. Sandford.

"Mother!" said Lucy, speaking with a sudden effort—"what happened to-day has decided me not to fulfil my engagement with Henry Watson."

Mrs. Sandford started in surprise. For a moment or two she could not believe that she had heard aright.

"If you have come to that conclusion, on such slight grounds," she replied, gravely, "I must say, that you have erred seriously. The cause is not one of sufficient weight to warrant consequences of such vital moment to both yourself and

the man to whom you have solemnly affianced yourself. Reflection, I am sure, will produce a change in your state of mind."

"No, mother. The conclusion to which I have come, is not one formed entirely and hastily from what took place to-day. It is not the first time since our engagement that I have seen Henry in liquor."

"But that is not a reason why you should break your contract with him."

"Mother!—that contract is a life-contract. It involves a whole life-time of happiness or misery."

"But it is made, Lucy. Have you a right to violate it?"

"If made in ignorance of circumstances that would have prevented it, I believe that I have; especially if those circumstances are such as to threaten the entire destruction of my happiness."

"I do not think any such circumstances exist," said Mrs. Sandford.

"And yet, they certainly do exist," replied Lucy. "No wife can be happy if she do not love her husband, truly,—no woman can truly love her husband if she cannot respect him,—and no woman can respect a man who drinks to intoxication."

"I believe with you, Lucy, that no woman, can truly respect and love a man who is an habitual drunkard; but this Mr. Watson is not; nor do I believe him in any danger of becoming one."

"I never thought him in danger; and yet I have seen him very much past the line of strict sobriety at least four times since our engagement has taken place; and at each time there has been a failing in my mind of respect, and, consequently, of affection. I could not help this. It was as natural for me as to breathe. I have struggled against it; but I would have been just as successful if I had endeavored to hold my breath. Had it not been for this, we would have been married months ago. It has been for this reason, that I have never been able to yield to his oft-repeated importunities to fix the wedding-day."

Mrs. Sandford listened to this declaration with surprise and pain, but with an internal conviction that her daughter was not so far wrong as she had at first supposed. But this she was not willing, as yet, to admit. She replied, in a less positive tone than the one in which she had been speaking,—

"This is a very serious matter, Lucy. One in which all

hasty decisions are wrong. I am very sure that your declining to fulfil your engagement with Henry Watson will not make you happy. I am not sure but that it will produce more unhappiness than your marriage possibly could, under the worst aspects in which you have viewed that event."

The tears filled into Lucy's eyes as she made answer—

"I have not been thinking of happiness, mother. I never expect to be happy. All my best hopes in life have here made shipwreck. What I have considered is, the thing it is *right* for me to do. Now, I do not believe it is right for me to marry a man, the tendency of whose course in life is gradually to destroy my respect for his character. It would neither be good for him nor myself. The final result would be misery to both, consequent upon a perversion of the holy state into which we had entered."

"Would it not have been better for you to have spoken to him on the subject, before coming to the conclusion just avowed?" asked Mrs. Sandford.

"No, mother, I think not. And, indeed, I could no more have opened my lips to him on that subject, than I could have flown. I would have grown crimson with shame at the first word, and become speechless."

"Your father could have done it for you, and perhaps it would have come better from him."

"No," was the maiden's firm reply. "I would not have that done for the world. I wish the man who has sought for my hand in marriage to be perfectly free to act as *he* thinks right. I wish him to do nothing simply with the end of gaining my favor, for that would not show me a phase of his real character. No—no. Let me see him as he really is, and then I can accept or reject from good grounds."

"But you must remember, Lucy, that you have already accepted Henry Watson."

"I do remember it, mother, and that is what makes my position so painful, difficult, and embarrassing. But I accepted him in ignorance of the weakness since developed, and now, as a wise woman, looking to all the consequences of my actions, I feel myself in duty bound to break that engagement. In doing it, you cannot know how much I suffer. I think of him and feel for him as well as for myself. I believe that he loves me devotedly.

I know that I love him. Oh! mother, can it be a good thing that rises up between us to make us both wretched, perhaps for life?"

"Might not that thing be put away, my child?"

"To ask him to quit drinking, altogether, would be felt as an insult. If he continues to drink, he will, as before, be tempted to indulge too freely. Here lies the difficulty."

Mrs. Sandford saw the difficulty as clearly as Lucy, but she did not think it best to say so. As a woman she felt that her daughter was right, but she did not clearly comprehend the mode of reasoning by which others could be convinced of the same thing.

On the morning after Christmas, Henry Watson awoke quite early. He felt as he had several times felt before, after late hours and free indulgence in the pleasure of drinking. Among his varied disagreeable sensations, a throbbing head-ache stood out pre-eminent. It was as if a hammer were beating in his brain, instead of the light pulsation in the thousand minute and thread-like arteries that spread themselves throughout that delicate organ.

It was some time after his eyes were open before he remembered with any distinctness the incidents of the preceding day. Gradually his memory restored them, dimly or vividly, according to the impression made at the time of their occurrence. Clear and distinct above all the rest stood out the scene at the dinner table. He saw Lucy's glass standing untouched before her, after all had drunk to him. He saw the tears gushing over her face. He saw her rise in confusion and retire from the room. The reason he too clearly comprehended.

"I must have been in a worse condition than I imagined," he said, rising up suddenly. As he did so, he saw himself in a glass, hanging opposite. The black patches of fur were still there, giving his face a singular and disgusting appearance.

"Can it be possible I went in this way!" he murmured, sinking back upon the bed. "No wonder Lucy was shocked. No wonder she retired from my presence in tears."

After lying for some minutes in a most painful state of mind, he arose from the bed and commenced dressing himself. He was nearly ready to go out, when Charles Graham threw open his door, exclaiming, as he stepped into the room—

"A merry Christmas, Harry!—How are you, my boy? I am glad to see there is something left of you. Oh! those horrid patches of fur; do for mercy's sake! take them off of your face."

"Do n't say merry Christmas to me," returned Watson. "Confound the day! I am almost tempted to hope that I may never see another."

"Hush! man. Are you mad?" responded Graham.

"I have been, that is certain; and whether I am now in my right mind, or not, is more than I can tell."

"Hut, tut, my boy! do n't talk in that way. You were only a little merry yesterday, and so was I, and a dozen more I could name."

"I trust you did n't make the fool of yourself that I did, then. You, at least, had sense enough to keep away from Sandford's."

"I dined there."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"And went there drunk?"

"I can 't exactly say that."

"Well, I can, then. I went there as drunk as a fool, with my face disfigured as you see it."

"I saw your grand entrance—ha! ha! What a figure you did cut!"

"And you of course saw the effect upon Lucy!"

"Yes;—poor thing! She seemed all struck down;—and one can hardly be surprised at it, for you did look like the very devil."

"So I should suppose. But, tell me, Charles, did you spend the afternoon there?—and if so, did you find out any thing that Lucy said about me. I should like very much to know how she felt and thought."

"Oh, no! I had sense enough to stay away. It was as much as I could do to keep from playing the fool outright before the whole family at dinner-time. I felt as light in the head as a balloon, and could hardly retain decent control of myself. I do n't think Jane suspected how bad it was with me. At least I hope she did not; though I do n't suppose it would be any great matter. Her brother, Doctor Sandford, was as blue as indigo at dinner-time, and lay drunk in his office most of the afternoon."

"Indeed! I am sorry to hear that. I am afraid the Doctor loves a glass almost too well."

"The same might be said of you, were people to judge of you by yesterday's achievements."

"I do n't know that I am particularly fond of a glass, or that I am in very great danger of becoming a drunkard. But I know that a very little gets into my head, and makes it spin like a top. I am almost tempted to swear off from ever touching a glass of brandy again as long as I live. To go and join your temperance men."

"Do! Ha! ha! That would be capital!"

"You need n't laugh. I am serious. What good, I should like to know, is there in pouring brandy down one's throat by the half pint, until he scarcely knows whether he is standing on his head, or his heels? Precious little; in my opinion! It is all very well to make of Christmas a festive occasion; but why it is necessary to take three or four glasses of egg-nog before breakfast is more than I can understand. A man must have more than ordinary strength of head to stand it. I do n't so much wonder that I got drunk, as I do that I was fool enough to drink as freely as I did of old Mr. Sandford's egg-nog. It was delicious, and tempting to the palate, I must own. But a single glass on an empty stomach was enough; particularly, as I had already drank three or four times."

"Nonsense, Harry! Do n't take the matter so much to heart. It will all be forgotten in a week, or, only remembered as a good joke. You need n't trouble yourself about Lucy. When you next meet her, you will find her as bright as a May morning."

"Others may forget it, but I cannot," the young man replied, seriously. "I feel that I have degraded myself, and cannot feel in any other way. If I had only kept away from Mr. Sandford's, I would not care so much; but to know that I mortified Lucy before a large company, is something that I cannot get over. I shall feel ashamed to see her."

"You need not, take my word for it. She understands these things well enough; and has already, I have no doubt, had more than one hearty laugh with her sisters about the ludicrous appearance you made when you came into the room and took your place at the table."

"It is n't very agreeable to know that you are an object of rid-

icule to any; and it is especially disagreeable to feel that the one you love has cause to laugh at you, and moreover, does do so. This view of the case, I can assure you, is not at all consolatory. It does not make me the less conscious that I have played the fool, and that is no very pleasant reflection to me."

"I never cry over spilled milk," replied Graham, gaily. "What is, *is*, and you can't make any thing better of it. You were drunk yesterday, and Lucy saw you drunk, and, no doubt, has laughed heartily since a dozen times, at the figure you cut. All that is done, and can't now be helped; so don't brood over it, but go out again with a brave face, as if nothing had happened. If people look queer at you,—even if Lucy's eyes are somewhat out of the right line of aspect when you meet, and have rather a doubtful expression, don't appear to notice it. Be as self-possessed, as free and easy as ever, and all will be forgotten in five minutes. I've been through this mill more than once, and know precisely how to act."

"Your advice is all very good, no doubt," said Watson, "for those who can profit by it, which is more than I can do. I feel as if I could creep through an auger hole, and shall feel smaller even than that when I step over the threshold of Mr. Sandford's door. Confound the egg-nog, hot-stuff, and brandy punches! I wish they had all been—in the middle of the Red Sea before I tasted them."

"Softly, softly, my gentle friend! Don't, as I have already said to you, abuse good liquors; abuse yourself for having abused these good gifts and creature comforts, if you must indulge in this way, the pressing necessity for which, however, I cannot very clearly see."

"I have abused myself, and I will do it over again, if that will be any satisfaction to you."

"Oh no, pray don't abuse yourself for my sake; only let good liquor alone. But cheer up, my boy! Christmas comes only once in the year, and we can afford to get drunk then. Nobody thinks anything of it. You are not a solitary case I can assure you. I am certain I did not see a dozen sober men all day. There was not one at Mr. Sandford's dinner party, except himself and the ladies, who could have walked a chalk line if they were to be hung for it. I am sure I could not."

"That is some consolation, at least. But Lucy's taking it so to heart is what troubles me most."

"Do n't fret yourself about that. I 'll be surety that her heart is not broken, by a great deal."

"Why do you say so?"

"A woman's feelings lie close to the surface. Because you happen to see tears streaming from her eyes one hour, it does n't prove that she will not be laughing fit to crack her sides in the next. Come, dress yourself, and walk forth like a man, and treat everybody that falls in your way as if nothing had happened. Call in and see Lucy when you feel inclined, and be as free and easy as ever. You will find all as usual, take my word for it."

Watson tried to believe that it was as his gay young friend had said, although he had many misgivings. He did not venture to call at Mr. Sandford's for nearly a week. Several times during that period he had dressed himself in the evening with the intention of going there, but his heart failed him. At last, from feeling that his remaining longer away would cause his continued absence to be remarked upon and make matters worse, he ventured to call in. He found Lucy alone in the parlor. She received him with her usual cheerful frankness; but appeared to him to be more thoughtful than formerly, and less inclined to enter into free conversation. As the evening progressed, she became sober and reserved, and seemed under considerable restraint. The effect of this was to dampen his feelings, and produce silence and reserve in turn. When he left the house, Watson found himself in a very unhappy state. The manner of Lucy was entirely changed; and there was no doubt in his mind of the cause.

Bitterly did he curse the cup of confusion that had been the cause of so great an evil as had been produced, and earnest were the resolutions he made never again to taste anything that had the power to rob him of the high gifts of reason.

"All is forgiven and forgotten!" said Jane, coming into the parlor, as soon as Watson had retired. "Just as I expected. I knew you had n't the resolution to give him the mitten."

Lucy made no reply. Her heart was too full. Bursting into tears, she arose and left the room.

Two days after this visit, Watson received a letter. Its contents ran thus.

"Dear Sir.—After many painful efforts, I at last have found

the power to compose my thoughts sufficiently to write to you, and ask a release of the contract entered into by us something like a year ago. Since our engagement, I have come into nearer contact with you, and observed you more closely. Had I known all that has since come under my observation, I would not have thought it right to enter into a marriage covenant with you;—this being so, is it right to consummate our engagement; I think not; and therefore beg of you to release me. This is no hasty conclusion. Had not a repugnance to a marriage with you existed, it would have taken place months ago. Recent circumstances have decided me to take the step I now do. Permit me to say, that the repugnance of which I speak has no reference to your honor and integrity as a man. No one would repel quicker and more indignantly than I would any imputation upon either. More than this I cannot say; unless it be, that in determining upon the course which I have taken, I have made no light sacrifice of feeling; I ought also to say, that no preference for any other has influenced me. I never expect to marry. I have loved you with truth and fervor,—I still love you,—and where your image has rested on my heart, none other can ever impress itself.

"Yours, etc.,

"Lucy Sandford."

The first impulse of Watson's mind, after reading this letter, was one of angry indignation. He threw it from him, and walked the floor of his room for some time with hasty steps.

"Talk of loving me?" he muttered. "No woman who had ever loved a man could write him such a letter!"

The mist that had arisen and obscured his perception at first, gradually became dissipated. His mind became calmer and clearer. In this state he took the letter of Lucy and read it over again. As at first, it produced agitation, but not so violent. Some portions of it seemed exceedingly cold and heartless; while in other parts he thought he could see the marks of deep feeling and tenderness. He read it again, with his mind fixed upon the different times which he had appeared in Lucy's presence partially intoxicated, and his indignation gradually gave place to a different emotion.

"It was a hard letter to write," he murmured to himself,—

"I do not know that she could have written it differently. Ah, me. We are both in false positions, and both unhappy. So much for a man putting a devil in his mouth to steal away his senses and make him play the fool even in the presence of his mistress. She engaged herself to a man who possessed his right reason; if he did not choose to keep that high endowment inviolate, who can blame her for breaking the engagement. Certainly will not I. No,—Lucy Sandford! though I love you as few men have loved or can love, yet you shall be free. I have proved myself unworthy of your hand.

In this state of feeling he sat down and wrote and despatched the following hurried reply.

"I have your letter. Its contents have stunned and bewildered me. You ask to be free. I cannot blame you. You *are* free,—and may God bless you and make you happier than is, or ever can be,

"Yours, etc.,

"Henry Watson."

This reply touched the heart of Lucy, and caused more than an incipient regret for what she had done. It caused her to ask herself the always perplexing question:

"Was I right or wrong?"

A question to which she could not now find a satisfactory answer.

When the course pursued by Lucy came to the knowledge of her father, he was very angry and reproached her bitterly. She received his reproof in meek silence. To her mother, she opened all her heart, and wept passionately upon her bosom. Jane blamed her severely; and Mary was silent, but more tender in her bearing towards her sister than usual.

Mrs. Sandford neither in words nor in her heart censured her daughter. The incidents of Christmas day, and the conversation that had passed with Mr. Jewett, had set her to thinking more seriously than usual upon the dangers likely to be in attendance upon a too free use of intoxicating drinks. Her son William, was so much affected by what he had been drinking, that his conduct at the dinner table on Christmas day had made her almost feel ashamed of him. His failure to come home to tea, and his

absence all night had produced a lively feeling of uneasiness. He was still away at the breakfast hour the next morning, and did not make his appearance until dinner time. Then his face and eyes were swollen, and his whole aspect that of a man who had been on a frolic for a week. His mother's heart bounded with a painful throb, when her eyes rested upon him, and for the first time the idea crossed her mind, with a thrill of alarm, that her son was in danger of becoming that despised, degraded, disgusting thing—a drunkard! This fear was hinted to her husband, but he half laughed at and half blamed her for indulging in such idle fears. But they were not idle. Her son was in imminent danger.

This being the case with Mrs. Sandford, she was prepared to understand Lucy's feelings, and to sympathise with her, truly.

"You do n't think I have acted wrong, mother, do you?" she said, looking into her face with tearful eyes, after she had told her all she had felt and thought for many months past.

"I should not like to say that you have acted wrong, Lucy," replied Mrs. Sandford. "But, I think you have acted rather hastily. Why did you not seek counsel at least of me."

"I did speak to you, freely, mother. I showed you, then, my feelings."

"I know you did. But, before the final act of rejection, your mother's advice might have helped you."

"I doubt not but it would," replied Lucy, leaning her head upon the shoulder of her mother, and pressing her hand between her own. "And yet, I do not know, but that it is much better that I should take the whole responsibility of the act, as I have done. No one but myself could understand, in all its bearings, my position; and no advice could have been given me, without bewildering my mind."

"I will not say you are wrong, my child," returned Mrs. Sandford, "in what you have done. A decidedly wrong action is done with wrong intent; and this is not the fact in your case. You may have erred; but I should not like to say that you have, —time alone can demonstrate this, and time will demonstrate it."

"I will endeavor to await the result as calmly as possible. At present, I feel that I am free to choose my own destiny in life; and this is something gained. I was not free before. My greatest grief is the knowledge that Henry, as is plain from his

letter, suffers deeply. I can bear my own burden, because it is self-imposed. But it pains me to know that I have laid a burden upon another that may not be so easily endured."

"It is done, now, my child, and done for the best. Let us wait for the developments of time. Your father is angry; but I will strive to appease him. He has a high regard for Mr. Watson, and thinks your treatment of him very bad. The objections you urge, seem to him entirely frivolous."

"But you do not think them so, mother," eagerly interrupted Lucy.

"No, Lucy, I do not," returned Mrs. Sandford. "And, moreover, you are to be the judge in a matter so vital to yourself; and any one who attempts to bias your clear judgment, forcibly, would be wrong."

"I wish father could only see a little differently from what he does," said Lucy. "He can use brandy, and all kinds of intoxicating liquors, without being in danger; but it may not be so with many young men who come here, and who are always asked by him to drink."

"I am sure," replied Mrs. Sandford, "that it *is not* so with many. I am very much afraid it is not so with William. On his account, I shall look for the coming of another Christmas with dread."

"And I," said Lucy, "am almost tempted to wish that I might never see the return of another. It cannot bring to me anything but painful recollections."

"I trust it will not be so," replied the mother. "The next return may be a happier one than either you or I anticipate."

"Heaven grant that it may," was the maiden's fervent response.

THE SECOND CHRISTMAS.

WINE EGG-NOG.

"WHO 's going to the temperance meeting to-morrow night?" said Edward Pryor one evening, about six months after the incidents already related had transpired. He was at the

house of Mr. Sandford, and spoke half jestingly and half in earnest. Nearly all the members of the family were present.

"Where is it to be held?" asked Mrs. Sandford.

"Over at the church. I am told there are to be several fine addresses."

"By whom?"

"A celebrated lecturer from New York is to speak, I understand."

"Are you going?" asked Mary.

"Yes," replied the young man, "provided I can get some good company. "Will you go?"

"Yes."

"And so will I, just for the fun of the thing," said Jane.

"You 'd better all stay at home," said old Mr. Sandford.

"Come, father, you shall go along," responded Jane to this, playfully. "I know you will be delighted."

"No doubt I should be greatly amused," returned Mr. Sandford; "and so would everybody else who saw me there. The temperance folks would think themselves getting on swimmingly if I were to appear among them."

"Come, do go, father, just for the fun of it," urged Jane, coaxingly. "We will all go."

"I 'll tell you what," returned Mr. Sandford, laughing, "if you will make Charles go, I 'll be one of the company."

"That 's more than she can do," said Edward Pryor.

"I am sure of that," added Mary.

"*I* am not so sure, then," replied Jane. "If father's going depends upon Charles, you will see him there."

"I doubt it," said one and another.

"You may all doubt as much as you please, but you will see Charles Graham there, notwithstanding."

"In case you prove successful, we shall have quite a party from here," remarked Mrs. Sandford, "and I must own, that I shall be pleased if you are. Lucy, you have n't said anything yet; will you go also?"

"Oh, yes," returned Lucy, with a quiet smile, "I will go with pleasure. I have had a good deal of curiosity about these temperance meetings, and should be well pleased to have it gratified."

"Very well. Jane, you must do your best to induce Charles to go."

"You need have no fears on that score, mother; Charles will be there."

"Do n't you think you could persuade him to make a temperance speech, or sing a temperance song?" said Mr. Sandford, laughingly. "It would give a fine zest to the evening's entertainment."

"I do n't know; but there will be no harm in asking him."

"Charles Graham make a temperance speech! Ha! ha!" broke in Edward Pryor, in a merry tone of voice. "I should almost as soon expect to see that, as to see Mr. Sandford himself on the rostrum."

"So should I, Edward," said Mr. Sandford. "Charles is a lad after my own heart, and not to be caught in any of your gull-traps. But Hark!—There is the bell. I should n't wonder if it were Charles himself."

On hearing this, Jane glided from the room, and went to the door. It was Charles Graham, as Mr. Sandford had surmised.

"I thought it was you, Charles," said Jane, catching hold of his extended hand with both of her own.

"Did you?" he returned, snatching a kiss from the maiden's willing lips.

"Yes, and I am glad you have come. I have a request to make, which you must promise me you will grant."

"Well, name the request."

"Oh, no! I want the promise beforehand."

"Indeed! Suppose you were to ask me to cut off my head?"

"You would be bound by your promise to do it, of course. But there is not much danger of that. Come, make me the promise before you go in. I want it on the spot."

"Well, I promise."

"That 's a dear, good soul! I knew you would."

"Now what dreadful thing am I to do?"

"Nothing more than to go with me to the temperance meeting to-morrow night."

"Jane!" ejaculated the young man in surprise.

"Oh, you need n't look so grave about it. You have promised; so now walk in.—Come!"

"To the temperance meeting, Jane? You are certainly jesting. Why do you want to go there?"

"Nonsense, Charles! Do n't make so much of an ado about

it. We got father, out of a piece of fun, to say that he would go if you would. I engaged to prevail on you to consent, and I have done it. We shall go in a strong party now, and perfectly astonish the people. But come, we must n't be standing here."

Young Graham and Jane then entered the parlors, the latter crying out at the top of her voice, and laughing so that she could hardly articulate—

"I told you I could get his consent! He says he will go."

"I do n't believe it," returned old Mr. Sandford. "Come, Charles, my boy, speak out for yourself."

"It 's too true," replied the young man. "But she cheated me by making me promise to grant a request before I knew what it was."

"The cunning jade! But that was hardly fair. You did n't promise with a full knowledge of what you were doing?"

"No, or I never would have done it."

"Then I think you had better re-consider the matter."

"No—no," said Jane. "It is a promise, and I hold him to it."

"And we hold you to your promise, father," broke in Mary.

"Oh, dear! That 's the worst part of it. I think I must beg off from its fulfilment."

"No, no, no," ran round the room. "It is a bargain, and we hold you to it. To-morrow night we are all to go to the temperance meeting."

"And Charles is to deliver a temperance address," said Mary, quietly.

"A what?" And the young man started with surprise.

"And sing a temperance song," added Jane.

"I believe I did n't promise all that, thank fortune!" said Graham.

"If you had, would you have done it?" asked Lucy.

"No."

"Not if you had promised me?" asked Jane.

"No, not if I had promised my great grandmother. A man is never under obligation to make a fool of himself, no matter what he has promised."

"A temperance meeting!" said Mr. Sandford, as if thinking aloud, after this lively chit-chat had begun to die away. "A temperance meeting! Has it really come to that? How will

I look and feel at a temperance meeting? How shall I manage to keep from laughing out aloud? Oh, dear! The thing is really amusing."

"Who knows but you will sign the pledge before you come home?" remarked Charles Graham.

"If I do you will, Charley."

"No doubt of it. We will both sign together, be it when it will."

"As we shall all be treading on dangerous ground to-morrow night," returned Mr. Sandford, "and as there is no telling but that we may all be hoaxed into signing the pledge, I think we had better have a good look at our old friends, Brandy & Co., to-night; so, if you will amuse yourselves, I will go and make a good bowl of punch. The talk about temperance has made me feel quite thirsty."

"And so it has me," said Graham. "A glass of your delicious punch will be just the thing."

When the punch came in, and was offered to young Pryor, he asked to be excused from drinking, as he had recently signed the pledge.

"The devil you have!" exclaimed old Mr. Sandford, thrown off of his guard by this unexpected declaration. "But you cannot be in earnest, Edward?"

"It is true," the young man replied, smiling in a quiet, unembarrassed manner.

"Signed the temperance pledge!" said the old gentleman, knitting his brows. "What in the name of common sense made you do that? Were you afraid of becoming a sot?"

"No, I had no special fears on that head," returned Pryor. "But I wished to quit the use of intoxicating drinks altogether, and thought the best thing for me to do was to join a temperance society; for then, when asked to drink, as I am almost every day, I had only to answer that I had signed a pledge not to drink, and the thing was settled without further debate. I would effectually bar off all persuasion. And such, I find, has been the case."

"You're a strange lad, Edward," said Mr. Sandford, in a milder voice than he had at first spoken in. "But ye must gang y'r ain gait. It will all come out right in the end, no doubt. I suppose the next thing I shall hear, will be that Mary has signed the pledge likewise."

Both Edward and Mary smiled, but neither made an answer.

Lucy and her mother also declined tasting the punch, somewhat to the annoyance of Mr. Sandford. But they urged the fact that it made their heads ache, and nothing very particular was said upon the subject.

Charles Graham drank freely, and, as usual with him, became quite merry,—merrier than seemed decorous to Mrs. Sandford, whose prejudices against the use of spirituous liquors were growing more and more decided every day, and whose observation of their effects became, in consequence, much closer. Before the company separated, Graham sang, with much spirit and effect, Moore's drinking song, commencing—

"One bumper at parting," &c.

Only one besides himself enjoyed this song, and that was Mr. Sandford. Even Jane felt worried at seeing her lover drink so freely, and show so plainly the effects of his deep potations. To her, the song seemed out of place.

On the next evening the same company re-assembled, but at a much earlier hour, preparatory to going, as proposed, to the temperance meeting.

"We shall need to be well fortified," said Mr. Sandford, just as they were about starting, going to the sideboard as he spoke, "in order to maintain our integrity to-night; and I do n't know how we can do this better than by taking a glass of old Irish whiskey. Come, Charles, I can depend on you in a strait of this kind, I know. Fill up your glass."

"You shan't do it!" whispered Jane, whose hand was on the arm of her lover, holding tightly on to him as she spoke. "I am not going into a church, to attend a temperance meeting, with you by my side smelling as strong as a whiskey bottle."

"What is that the girl is saying? Why do n't you come up and fill your glass?" said Mr. Sandford, looking earnestly at Charles Graham.

"Excuse me, if you please, this evening, Mr. Sandford, and I will make it up some other time," replied Charles. "I am going to a temperance meeting, and it is the opinion of those who have me in charge, that the smell of whiskey would not be very agreeable or quite in place there."

"Perhaps it would n't," replied the old gentleman, pushing

aside the decanter he had offered to Graham. "If we go to Rome, I suppose we must do as the Romans."

The village church at which the temperance meeting was to be held, stood from the dwelling of Mr. Sandford, distant about a quarter of a mile. It was a beautiful moonlight evening, and the walk was enjoyed by the party. Lucy walked with her father and mother, and was the only one not inclined to converse freely. Six months had elapsed since her letter to Watson, by which her engagement with him was broken off. During that period she had not once met with him, nor had she heard of him, except casually, and involving no particulars regarding him whatever. He had left his boarding-house in the village, and lived now, altogether at his mill, a mile distant from the residence of Mr. Sandford, in rigid seclusion. His business went on as usual, and his business intercourse remained the same; but no one met him in the social circle. Sometimes Lucy half repented of what she had done; but a calm review of the whole subject generally restored her self-approbation. Still, she suffered greatly, for her love for Watson had been no girlish passion. Deeply enshrined in her heart lay his image, which neither change nor absence could efface. One of the consequences of the estrangement which had taken place, was a more subdued and quiet exterior than she had previously possessed. This was, of course, only the effect of an internal change. There was now a constant pressure upon her spirits, by which the spontaneous uprising of those innocent, every-day affections, which are continually coming to the surface, and smiling as they meet the light, were checked and held in bondage. And beyond this, she had cause for serious disquietude. The fact of her having been made to sacrifice so much, and suffer so much, in consequence of the one she loved having permitted himself to indulge too freely in the pleasures of drinking, made her regard every one around her who used intoxicating liquors with more attention than formerly. Particularly was her observation directed towards her brother William, who she grieved to see, showed more palpable evidences every day of too great indulgence. She noticed that he drank, at dinner-time, nearly double the quantity of brandy that her father did, and that he arose from the table with every appearance of being much under its influence. Her fears remained her own. She particularly avoided even whispering them to

her mother. But this reserve, on her part, did not close Mrs. Sandford's eyes. Her heart had already taken the alarm, and she watched the gradual declension of her son from sobriety with an anguish of spirit that she could with difficulty conceal. And both she and Lucy had cause for all their fears. Doctor Sandford was fast verging on towards that sad period, when the power of self-control is lost, and the unhappy victim of a diseased appetite is borne on towards ruin with a fearfully accelerating motion. Already had this become so apparent, that two or three families, in which he had practiced since his graduation, declined trusting their sick members in his hands.

This was the aspect of affairs at the time of which we write. To the casual observer, everything looked peaceful as usual; but to the eyes of those whom experience had given the power of looking below the surface, a shadow from some approaching evil was too plainly to be seen.

When our party arrived at the village church, they found a much greater and more respectable concourse of people than they had expected. It was with some difficulty that they could all procure convenient seats in the vicinity of each other. Many eyes were turned upon them, and sundry whispers passed from pew to pew, communicating the intelligence that Mr. Sandford and all his family were there—a circumstance so unexpected as to be a matter of wonder. The old gentleman perceived this and it annoyed him considerably. He became quite uneasy, and fidgetted a good deal. Charles Graham, at first, felt inclined to laugh, but the number, character and demeanor of those present, soon caused a graver mood to come over him.

In about five minutes from the time our little party entered, one of the ministers who preached in the village, came forward upon the stand that had been erected upon the railings of the alter or chancel, and upon which were a number of persons so thickly seated as to conceal many at the back part of the stand from view. He briefly announced, in appropriate terms, the object of the meeting, and then read a hymn, which was sung by the choir. Prayer was next offered up, followed by an anthem. After this came an eloquent and stirring address from a stranger. He related many touching incidents in his own history, and contrasted vividly the condition of himself and family one year before to what it then was. When he sat down, old Mr. Sand-

ford wiped his eyes in order to see more clearly. After this speaker a very common looking old man came forward upon the stand, and after some hesitation and evident embarrassment said,—

"My friends, I am no speaker, but my heart burns so within me when I see so many people together, that I must speak out, in my rude way, something that I feel. I know there are a great many here who laugh at temperance, and call all temperance folks fools;—so did I, once, and I went on laughing until I made a drunkard of not only myself, but my oldest boy"—here the man's voice trembled, and he made a slight pause in order to recover himself. "My boy was as promising a lad as any in the place where we lived. I was very proud of him, and spent all I could spare on his education. When he was twenty-one, he became quite serious, and somebody persuaded him to join a Temperance Society. I heard of it before he had put his name to the paper, I told him that if he did make such a fool of himself, I would never have any thing more to do with him. Poor boy! He would have jumped from a house top I believe, rather than have displeased me then. Ah, me! I wish it were so now. After my objection, he refused to sign the pledge.

"In our village there were two classes of young men who rarely associated much together. One set were rather wild and frolicsome, and were never seen at church on Sundays;—the others were religiously disposed, and led orderly, moral lives. Charles, my son, was more inclined to associate with the latter than the former. These, after the temperance reformation began, got up a Temperance Society, and it was then that I interposed to prevent Charles joining in with them. The consequence was, that he was not as much at home with them as before, and became gradually estranged from them. As some kind of company was necessary for him, his intimacy with the wilder class of young men increased as it decreased with the other. He ceased, after a while, to attend church on Sundays, preferring to spend the day in riding out with his thoughtless companion to a tavern about three miles from the town, and there drinking and playing cards sometimes until midnight.

"While my boy was walking so early and so swiftly along the road to ruin, I was not doing much better; only, I was older, and had a cooler head, and did not run so wildly into excesses, as he

did. Two years after I had interposed to prevent Charles from joining a Temperance Society, he got married. This I hoped would wean him from his gay associates, and wild habits; and so it did for a time. But, as he had always seen me drink, and had been taught by me to drink once or twice every day, and as he had got to be fond of liquor, he kept his side-board well supplied with the best he could obtain, and used it freely. In about a year after his marriage, home pleasures became too tame for him. He went more frequently to the tavern, and staid there longer than usual. I saw his danger, and attempted to talk with him about it, but he became angry, and we had no intercourse with each other for more than two years.

"But I will not weary you by dwelling any longer, minutely, on this sad history. It is enough that both Charles and myself went the downward road, rapidly. Thank God! I was checked in my fearful speed, ere I reached the pit of destruction. A friend of humanity—a temperance man—grasped me by the hand and saved me. Since then, I have labored hard for my poor boy, but so far all has been unavailing. His almost broken hearted wife, and his three worse than fatherless children, are now under my protection, and dependent upon my toil, old man and worn with years as I am, for food and raiment. Ah! my friends, rum is a curse! Let me implore you, as one who has felt its poison-fire in every vein; as one whom it hath brought in old age a bitter portion, to expel it from your dwellings. If you do not, take my word for it, that, in the end, it will bite like a serpent and sting like an adder."

When the old man ceased speaking, a murmur of feeling ran through the whole church. Almost every heart was touched, and many eyes were wet with tears. Mr. Sandford had listened with intense interest. In the speaker's son, he could see his own boy, William, and he saw as he had never before seen, that he was in the most imminent danger. He could not repress a long, deep sigh, when the address was closed, nor help resolving to be more careful in future how he encouraged young men to drink.

A temperance hymn was sung, and then there was a pause, and all looked towards the stand for the next speaker. It was some time before he arose. At length a fine looking young man, who had been sitting far back, arose and advanced to the front of the stage. Lucy's heart gave a wild, tumultuous throb, and then fluttered like a quivering leaf. It was Henry Watson!

The young man, although unobserved himself, had noticed, with surprise, the entrance of Mr. Sandford and his family, and since the opening of the meeting, had seen little else but the face of Lucy. Six months had passed since his eyes had looked upon her. To him she was much changed. Her cheek was thinner, her eye sadder, and the expression of her face subdued and tender. Her whole appearance had the effect to kindle into a brighter flame the still living fires of love that had ceased not to burn in his heart. The consequences that had followed his dissipation on Christmas day, had been so disastrous, that, in the bitterness of present suffering, he had vowed solemnly that he would never again place the cup of confusion to his lips. This vow he kept. Some months afterwards he had been induced to become active in the temperance movement. On the present occasion, through earnest persuasion, he had consented to become one of the speakers. Deeply did he regret this, when he observed the presence of Lucy and all the members of Mr. Sandford's family. To stand up, and deliver a regular address on temperance, with them as auditors, seemed to him, for a time, more than he could possibly do. But a consciousness of right intention and the good to be done, gradually restored the balance of his mind, and when it became his turn to stand forth, he did so without a quivering nerve.

The address delivered by Watson had been carefully prepared, and was given by him with fine effect. Some portions of it were deeply touching, and evidently alluded to himself, though delicately and remotely; and other portions were brilliant and powerful. Mr. Sandford was entirely taken by surprise at the mode in which Watson treated his subject. It was forcible and conclusive at every point. He could not bring his mind to negate his positions and reasoning, for his judgment approved, while his prejudices all opposed his affirmation of them. He was in this state of mind at the close of the meeting, when the pledge was passed round for signatures.

"I 'm going to sign it," said Charles Graham, leaning over, and whispering in the ear of Mr. Sandford. "Confound it all! nobody can stand this."

"Do as you please; I have nothing to say," replied the old gentleman, in a subdued voice.

"Will you sign?" asked Graham.

"No," was the reply.

"I can't help it—I must; for, if I keep on, I shall come out in the end like that old man's son, and no mistake. I see it as clear as daylight."

"Sign it then, in the name of heaven!" returned Mr. Sandford. "I would n't say nay, for the world."

By this time the pledge had reached the place where they were sitting. Graham promptly subscribed his name, and handed the pledge to Mrs. Sandford, who placed her signature to it. Lucy did the same, and also Jane and Mary. Mr. Sandford then took the paper and handed it back to the person who had brought it.

"But you have n't signed it," said the man.

"No, nor do I intend doing so."

"But, my dear sir—"

Mr. Sandford waved his hand impatiently, saying, as he did so—

"No more, if you please, sir. You have got all my family that are here. Be content with that. As for me, I act for myself."

To have said anything farther by way of inducement would have been inde orous, and the man passed on to the next pew. More than two thirds of those present signed the pledge that night. It was what has been called the old pledge, and covered only distilled liquors. Wine, cider and beer were not included in its proscriptions.

After the conclusion of the meeting, the press of persons into the aisle was so great, that Mr. Sandford and his family remained standing in the pew they occupied, until the crowd had become less. While still there, Watson, who was moving towards the door, under the impression that Lucy had already retired with her friends, found himself face to face with Mr. Sandford.

"Why, Harry, my boy! I am right down glad to see you," said the old gentleman with animation, grasping the young man's hand. "How have you been this long time." It is as much as one's life is worth to get a sight of you."

Watson had a good deal of self-possession and presence of mind. He would have carefully avoided the situation in which he found himself placed; but now that he was in it, he made a strong effort to appear as unconcerned as possible. From Mr. Sandford, he had next to speak to Mrs. Sandford, who stood by his side. She seemed much pleased to see him and expressed her gratifica-

tion at finding him so able an advocate of the good cause. Lucy was near her mother, and looked up into his face with a timid, earnest expression. He offered his hand, murmuring in a low voice as he did so, what was more than an idle compliment.

"I am glad to see you, Lucy."

The maiden's face became suffused and her eyes dim as she took his offered hand, and felt its thrill once more in her own. There was a gentle reciprocal pressure, and then their hands unclasped. Jane and Mary were spoken to in turn, and last he grasped the hand of Charles Graham, saying, with an animated smile, as he did so—

"That was well done, my old friend! But it was more than I expected of you."

"Or I of myself, Harry. But the deed is done, and I cannot say I am sorry for it."

"And never will be, let me tell you."

"No, I suppose not. But, Harry! How long is it since you became a temperance lecturer?"

"You have heard my maiden speech."

"No?"

"Yes, I never made an address before."

"How long since you gave up brandy punches, egg-nog, and all those vanities and vexations of spirit."

"Many months," returned Watson in a low tone, but not so low that it did not reach the attentive ear of Lucy.

"Well, I must say, strange things happen in this world, and the strangest of all is that *I*, Charles Graham, should become a staid and sober member of a temperance society! But there is no telling when a man is born, what he is going to come to before he dies."

By this time the aisle was clear and the party had, one after another, left the pew and were moving towards the door. As if the Fates would have it so, spite of all his little efforts to avoid it, Watson found himself at the side of Lucy nearly the whole way down the aisle. He did not venture to address any conversation to her, for he felt that he had no right to do so. At the door of the church Mr. Sandford said to him—

"Come and see us, Harry! You need n't be afraid of my egg-nog, or whiskey punch, for after this it will be more than I dare even to name the one or the other."

"We shall be happy to see you, Mr. Watson," added Mrs. Sandford.

The young man bowed low to the whole party and then retired into the crowd without making any reply.

The sober second thoughts of Mr. Sandford's family, produced no regrets at what seemed a hasty decision and action. The old gentleman ceased to rail at temperance, and was much more careful about offering his fine old French brandy, and Monongahela and Irish whiskeys to his visitors. A bottle of prime ale, or a glass of choice wine was however, an excellent substitute, and generally appeared to be relished as well as the other.

The incidents of the temperance meeting, threw Lucy's mind all into confusion. She had broken her engagement with Watson solely on the ground of his too free indulgence in drink, and now, all unexpectedly, he stood before her, as a brilliant advocate of temperance, and she had heard enough of the brief conversation that passed between him and Graham, to be satisfied that he had not tasted spirituous liquors since the breach of her contract with him. Her love for him had continued unabated, and now it burned with an increasing fervor. What were his feelings towards her, was now the serious and unanswerable question she asked herself. That he was not indifferent to her, she had sufficient intuition to perceive; but whether his pride had not been too deeply wounded by her rejection to permit him to renew his suit, was, she could not help thinking, more than probable. As a woman, she could not recall her act, and it was very doubtful, she felt, whether he understood with sufficient clearness, her motive for what she had done, to venture upon any advances towards her, even if not prevented by pride.

This was Lucy's state of mind for some days after her attendance at the temperance meeting. On the third day she received a note which put her mind at rest. It was from Watson, and ran thus:—

"Dear Lucy.—I enclose a letter which I received from you some months ago. Believing that the cause for the decision you then came to no longer exists, I send back your letter. If I am right, and your letter is not returned to me, I will seek to forget ever having received it. Yours, as ever,

Henry Watson.

We need not say that Lucy destroyed the letter this note enclosed almost as soon as received. Three days afterwards, Watson called to see her. She received him with eyes overflowing in tears, and with the warmest demonstrations of tenderness.

From that time, Watson and Graham became two of the warmest and most prominent advocates of temperance in the neighborhood. They could not prevail upon old Mr. Sandford to sign the pledge, nor to give up his daily glass of brandy at dinner; but they could make him understand the danger of its use in young men, and induce him not to make, as heretofore, the decanter of brandy or whiskey the indispensable adjunct of hospitality. In place of this, however, wine flowed freely; and in the use of this both Watson and Graham indulged freely, without the first suspicion that there might be danger here as well as in the use of alcoholic drinks.

Meanwhile, the case with Doctor Sandford became worse and worse. He laughed at every argument used by his best friends to induce him to give up drinking, contended that it did him no harm, and pointed triumphantly to his father as proof that a man might drink brandy every day without being in the danger he was warned so eloquently to avoid. It was in vain that it was plainly pointed out to him that he was frequently overcome by drink, and that he was losing his position in society; he treated all with levity, and went on in his own way. At last, in the hope of influencing his son, old Mr. Sandford gave up the use of spirituous liquors entirely, and joined the village temperance society. But it availed nothing. William laughed at his father as being in the hands of keepers, and went on drinking as usual.

Time wore on, and the next Christmas drew near. The marriage of Watson and Lucy was fixed to take place in February; and that of Graham and Jane a month later.

"I don't know what you are going to do to-morrow, Mr. Sandford," said Graham to him, laughing, on Christmas eve. "You will be lost without that bowl of egg-nog."

"You don't suppose that I am going to give my old friend Christmas so shabby a welcome," replied Mr. Sandford. "Oh, no. The bowl of egg-nog is indispensable."

"You are not in earnest?"

"Certainly I am. Who but a heathen would think of celebrating Christmas without egg-nog?"

"But you forget that you have signed the pledge."

"No I do n't. But I did n't sign the pledge not to make a bowl of egg-nog on Christmas."

"Although you did not to *drink* it."

"Beg your pardon, I did no such thing."

Graham looked serious.

"I am sure you cannot be in earnest," he said, after a thoughtful pause.

"I am very sure I am then; and I am also sure that I shall have the pleasure of taking a glass with you."

"Oh, no; that you will not."

"I know I will."

"And I know you will not. I would as soon think of drinking poison as violating my solemn pledge."

"Oh, that is another matter. I said nothing about violating your pledge."

"But how can I drink egg-nog without violating my pledge?"

"Easily enough; and I will show you how to do it to-morrow."

"It will be a *rara avis*, then—egg-nog without brandy."

"Exactly! That 's what it will be."

"Tasteless stuff!"

"Not by any means. Good Madeira or Sherry is very nearly equal to brandy."

"*Wine egg-nog!* Capital! Who but you would have thought of that? Hurrah, for Christmas! We shall give the old fellow a hearty welcome still."

"That we will, as hearty as ever; and pledge him, as heretofore, in bumpers of delicious egg-nog."

"You shall have the loudest kind of a salute to-morrow morning."

"And you the best glass of egg-nog you ever drank. Come along:—I shall be ready for you as usual."

"I shall be there, depend upon it, with half a dozen as lively temperance boys as you could wish to see."

"Very well; the more the merrier."

On the next morning by peep of dawn, Graham, with his temperance boys, made the welkin ring with their Christmas guns. Open flew Mr. Sandford's hospitable doors as of old, and within was found, temptingly displayed, the usual abundant supply of the

good things of the season. Mrs. Sandford was at the head of the table, and her husband opposite, with his large punch bowl before him, full to the brim. The girls stood by ready to proffer to all who came the good cheer so freely provided. The first who bounded in was Charles Graham, followed closely by Watson, Pryor, James Sandford, and one or two others.

"A merry Christmas!—A merry Christmas!" rang through the room, for some moments,—then followed greetings and smiles, and all sorts of agreeable compliments.

"Now for the egg-nog, my lads," said Mr. Sandford, filling up a row of glasses from his punch bowl with his silver ladle that was produced just once a year to grace this festival. "This is *temperance egg-nog*, and worthy the name. Drink! There is no danger of your head and heels changing place after this. What do you think of it, Charley?"

"First rate!" replied Graham, taking his glass from his lips after having drank more than half of its contents. "I call it an improvement on what we had last Christmas—a decided improvement in flavor, and superior in quality."

"So I think," said Mr. Sandford. "I was afraid for a while, that all our Christmas pleasures were to be sacrificed to this great temperance idol, as I used to call it. But I was in error, it seems. We have all signed the pledge, yet here we are on this blessed Christmas morning, as merry as ever. Can 't we have a song, as usual? I can see nothing to hinder. Charley, come, give us a song."

The young man sang, as requested, a song appropriate to the occasion, and then all the glasses were filled again, and emptied in a trice.

Nearly an hour was spent in drinking, singing, and eating, and then after accepting an invitation to dine, the gay company of young men retired, feeling much merrier than when they came. What was unusual on these occasions, the great punch bowl was empty. Formerly, it had lasted through the morning.

"Not a glass full left, as I live!" said Mrs. Sandford, leaning over the table, and looking to the very bottom of the deep punch bowl. "I do n't see that the change from brandy to wine has at all diminished their appetites."

"Not in the least. Well, I like to see the lads enjoying themselves, particularly when there is no danger. They might drink

a barrel full of this without it hurting them. If egg-nog goes at this rate, I shall have to replenish the bowl at least half a dozen times before night."

From Mr. Sandford's, Graham and his party returned to their homes, feeling much lighter about the head than was exactly comfortable.

"I should call the old gentleman's wine pretty strong," remarked Watson, as they walked away from Mr. Sandford's. "I feel confoundedly top-heavy."

"How many glasses did you drink?" asked Graham.

"How many glasses? Humph! Something short of a dozen."

"No wonder you are top-heavy."

"But there did n't seem to be much strength in it. How could there be, if there was only wine in it? I wonder if the old gentleman has n't been tricking us? I wonder if there was n't a little brandy mixed with the wine?"

"Oh, no! Has n't he signed the pledge?"

"Yes; but I can 't understand how *wine* egg-nog could make me nearly half drunk?"

"Think of the quantity."

"Quantity? A man ought to be able to drink a gallon of such stuff and not feel it."

It was true as Watson had intimated. The wine egg-nog had gone into his head, and made it feel as heavy as if a ten-pound weight had been inside of it. He still resided at his mill, nearly a mile distant, and had ridden over before day-light to join the party who were to give old Mr. Sandford the usual morning salute. Graham tried to persuade him to go home with him to breakfast, but Watson declined. He went to the stable where he had left his horse, and mounting the animal, started for the mill. By this time, his condition had changed very considerably for the worse. The large quantity of wine he had taken, upon an empty stomach, had continued to go into his head, and the eggs, sugar and milk, with which it had been compounded, nauseated him soon after he began to feel the motion of the horse.

"That man is drunk," he heard some one say, as he rode along, endeavoring as best he could to keep a firm and upright position in his saddle.

"A merry Christmas! Ha! ha!" greeted his ears, soon after.

"There goes Harry Watson, the great temperance speaker, as drunk as Bacchus! Hurrah for temperance!"—was shouted soon after, by some one whom he was too blind to see.

"Drunk!"—he muttered to himself, leaning forward and grasping the saddle, in order to sustain himself—"Drunk—*hiccup!* No, I can't be drunk—*hiccup!* What could make me—*hiccup!* drunk? I've taken nothing but *wine egg-nog*."

"Take care, man! You'll tumble off,"—said a quick, earnest voice, near him.

"Shut your trap?—will you? What would make me—*hiccup!*—fall off?"

"Rum, I s'pose," retorted the individual who had given the warning.

"Rum, indeed!" replied Watson, thickly; his head falling over first on one side and then on the other side of his shoulder. "Humph! I'm a temperance man; *hiccup!* and don't drink rum."

"Ha! ha! That's a good one! What did make you drunk, then, my friend?"

"I d'no—*hiccup!*"

"Was it cold water? Look out, there! You'll be off and break your neck."

"Don't, *hiccup!* fatigue yourself, friend! I can ride as safely as you can. I can walk, *hiccup!* a chalk line. Get up, Ned!"

And saying this, Watson applied his whip sharply to his horse's shoulders. The animal made a spring, and he, to save himself, bent forward, and grasped his arms tightly around his neck. This movement fretted the horse, who broke into a full gallop, and swept off at a fearful speed, that increased every moment. Watson clung on for a few hundred yards, and was then thrown off. He fell with such force upon the frozen ground as to injure himself severely. He was taken up insensible, and much bruised, and, on examination, it was discovered that one of his legs and several ribs were broken.

The family of Mr. Sandford were assembled at the breakfast table, chatting pleasantly, and all feeling as happy as they had ever felt on a Christmas morning.

"I don't see," remarked Mrs. Sandford, "that the banishment of brandy and rum has taken anything from our pleasures

this morning. I believe there was no one here that did not enjoy himself as much as he ever did before, on a like occasion."

"Wine is a very good substitute," returned Mr. Sandford,—"and can be taken without danger by our young men, whose thoughtlessness and ardency of feeling are apt to make them use spirituous liquors more freely than it is safe for them to do."

William Sandford was present, and did not like the remark of his father. He replied,—

"A man can get drunk upon wine as well as upon brandy."

"He may, if he drink enough, but the instances will be found rare indeed of persons becoming intoxicated on wine."

"I do n't know," returned William. "Your temperance movement has taken us all by storm. Everybody is signing the pledge. But I see as many at the tavern as ever. There is not as much brandy and rum and gin taken as before, but wine and beer and cider flow like water."

"No doubt there are more fermented liquors drunk than formerly," said Mr. Sandford. "But you do not see one intoxicated and debased where you saw ten before."

"It is all very well to assume that, father; but I can tell you, that I have seen just as many young men drunk this morning as I ever did on Christmas."

"You must be mistaken, William," said Mrs. Sandford.

"Indeed, mother, I am not," returned her son. "I have taken a single glass of egg-nog, made with brandy. Your egg-nog, you say, was made with wine. I feel as sober as ever I did in my life, and I will wager a dollar, that five out of six who were here this morning, are more than two-thirds drunk."

"William, that is not true," said Lucy, looking at her brother with a slight frown, and speaking in a half indignant tone.

"Do n't be so certain of that Lu," returned her brother, smiling. "I saw even Harry Watson, not half an hour ago, so drunk that he could hardly sit upon his horse."

"It is false!" indignantly replied Lucy.

"Do n't get into a passion, sis," quietly replied William. "It won't help the matter any. I should n't wonder if Harry's neck were broken before this, for that horse he rides is a skittish animal, and full of fire."

"William, are you really serious?" asked Mr. Sandford in a grave tone.

"I certainly am, father. As I came home from my office, I met him riding along, so much intoxicated that his head was rolling from side to side upon his shoulders, and the people in the streets were laughing at him, and pointing him out as the drunken temperance apostle."

At this moment a man, who was an acquaintance of the family, came in hurriedly, saying, in a loud, excited voice, as he entered,—

"Mrs. Sandford! Poor Harry Watson has been thrown from his horse and killed! Is the doctor here?"

William sprung from the table, exclaiming, "Good Heavens! Where is he?"

"At Gardiner's," replied the man.

The doctor rushed from the house. A wild scream from Lucy marked the effect of the dreadful intelligence upon her. She fell back, insensible, into the arms of Jane, who sat by her side. Old Mr. Sandford followed his son quickly. When he arrived at Gardiner's tavern, he found a large crowd assembled there; he forced his way into the bar-room, where Watson had been conveyed, and laid upon a table. Doctor Sandford's lancet was already in his arm, and the blood flowing freely.

"Not dead, thank God!" ejaculated the old man, as soon as he saw the stream of blood.

"Oh, no; he is not dead," replied one or two who stood by, "he is only stunned."

"His leg is broken," remarked one of the men who had helped to bring him in.

"Are you sure?" asked the doctor.

"Too sure," was the reply.

A deep groan from the injured man, indicated the return of sensation. His heart began to beat stronger and fuller—the circle of life was restored. Doctor Sandford closed up the orifice his lancet had made, and bandaged the arm. He then commenced a careful examination of the body to see what was the extent of injury sustained. It was too true as the man had said. One of his legs was broken across the thigh. After this had been properly set and bandaged, a farther examination discovered three fractured ribs. These were treated with the required skill, and one or two bad cuts dressed. The whole of this work occupied over an hour, by which time Watson was fully conscious of his unhappy condition.

"Let him now be removed to my house," said Mr. Sandford. "Some of you make a litter, in which to convey him with as little pain as possible."

"Thank you, Mr. Sandford," returned Watson, speaking in a low voice, while his brow was contracted with pain. "I feel deeply the kindness you propose; but I cannot consent to be taken to your house. Let me be removed to the mill, where all necessary attendance can be procured for me. It may be months before I can go out, and it would not be right for me to burden your family for so long a time."

"What say you, Doctor?" was Mr. Sandford's reply to this, turning to his son. "Do you think he can be as well attended at the mill as he can at my house?"

"No, certainly not. His leg is badly fractured, and he is hurt in other ways seriously. There may also be internal injuries, not now indicated in a way for me to detect them. Much will depend upon the treatment and attention he receives."

"Then he must be taken to my house. Let some one prepare a litter immediately."

"No—no—no! I positively object," said Watson.

"Doctor," said Mr. Sandford, "this man is sick, and under your charge. Order him to be sent where you think he ought to go. His life is in your hands. What you say will be strictly obeyed."

William understood his father perfectly. "Let him be removed to my father's house," he said. "His life depends upon his being carefully attended, and nowhere will it be more carefully done than there."

The earnest remonstrances of the young man were of no avail. The litter was made, and he placed upon it, and conveyed to the dwelling of Mr. Sandford.

Lucy, who had fainted at the announcement that her lover had been thrown from his horse and killed, was borne up to her chamber and laid upon her bed. Bathing her face in cold water, and other means usually resorted to under similar circumstances, had the effect to restore her to conciousness. By the time this occurred, the family were in possession of more accurate information on the subject of the accident, and Lucy, on the return of reason, was met by assurances that Watson was still alive, but seriously injured. To her earnest inquiries as to the particulars

of the accident, she received from her mother all the information she had gained, which was accurate. The cause was not concealed. He had drank so much of her father's temperance egg-nog, as to become very much intoxicated, and in this condition had attempted to ride home, and been thrown from his horse and nearly killed.

Lucy's mind was still in a state of painful confusion, when word was sent home by Mr. Sandford, that Watson was to be brought there for the purpose of receiving proper attendance until he recovered from the injuries he had received. This brought her mind to the immediate consideration of her duty to herself and to Watson. Should all remain as before between them, or did the fact of his having become intoxicated again, alter the relation that had for some time existed. She had not been able to decide this question, when four men entered the house, bearing upon a litter the body of him she had long loved with tenderness and fervor. Time for further reflection there was none. Watson was before her, pale, helpless, and suffering intensely, and all her woman's heart burned within her in sympathy for him. From that moment, she became his untiring attendant. She was his companion when awake, and his watcher when asleep. Of the cause of his sad situation, she would not permit herself to think—in fact, she dared not do it.

The evening that closed this day, was one of sober reflection to Mr. Sandford. Several friends, young and old, called in, some to inquire about and see Watson, and others to spend an hour in a social way with either Mr. Sandford or some of his family. On former occasions like this, good cheer was always abundant; but now not even a bottle of wine was produced, much to the surprise of every one. Mr. Sandford evidently strove to do every thing in his power to entertain his friends, but all could see that some painful process of thought was going on in his mind. Long before ten o'clock, all had retired, and left the family alone, and they, soon after, sought each his or her own chamber, feeling more oppressed and unhappy than they had felt for many months.

So much for *wine* egg-nog!

THE THIRD CHRISTMAS.

ADAM'S ALE.

GREAT was the scandal to the Temperance cause that followed the *wine* egg-nog substitute of Mr. Sandford. Watson was not the only one who fell under its potent influences. Charles Graham, and James Sandford, who had never in his life before been intoxicated, besides nearly all the half dozen "temperance lads," who saluted with the double-charged guns old Mr. Sandford and his family on Christmas morning, were seen staggering about the village some time during the day. Even the shock occasioned by the accident to Watson was not sufficiently powerful to sober them.

The enemies of temperance, in the neighborhood, urged on by the various tavern-keepers, walked forth boldly again, and even went so far as to form an Anti-Temperance Society, and hold public meetings at which humorous addresses were delivered, in ridicule of the "wine egg-nog boys," who had disgraced themselves on Christmas-day, as well as the cause they advocated.

All this was mortifying and painful to Mr. Sandford. He had identified himself with the temperance movement, after a long opposition, and in a few months afterwards he had been the means of not only throwing discredit upon it, but of giving its enemies a triumph and strength. Nor did the evil merely stop here. So pointed and searching was the ridicule thrown upon all who advocated temperance principles, that very many abandoned the ground they had taken and joined in the spirited opposition that was now in the ascendant. And if any one who remained firm to his pledge and advocacy of temperance, presumed to open his mouth, he was forced back into silence by the cry of—

"Oh! you are one of the wine egg-nog boys! Capital stuff that, when one can afford it—Ha! Ha!"

It was of no use to attempt an argument against all this. Ridicule was too potent, and the grieved and mortified advocate had to close his lips. He was for awhile powerless.

For some time the condition of Watson was a very precarious one. Fever and inflammation of the injured parts, rendered his case difficult of management. He suffered, too, great pain. For

more than a week from the time of the accident, so great was the nervous irritation and pain he experienced, that he was unable to sleep, unless from the effects of powerful anodynes. What added to the difficulties of his case, was the mental disquietude, and sense of shame under which he labored. Bodily anguish, severe as it was, could not overshadow these.

In about two weeks, all unfavorable symptoms, with the attendant suffering, had subsided, and Watson was in a fair way to recover rapidly. The subsidence of pain naturally left his mind clearer and more tranquil. From the time he was brought into the house, Lucy had been his faithful nurse and constant companion. Thus far no allusion whatever had been made by either to the cause of the accident. It was a subject both felt willing to avoid. Now, however, Watson began to feel that it was his duty to say something that would lead Lucy to express her real sentiments. If she wished again to be free from her engagement, he felt that she ought to be free. The serious, almost sad expression her face constantly wore, naturally led his mind to the inference that she did not wish to fulfil her contract with him.

"Lucy," he said to her, one day when they were alone, "as all danger is now past, and I am recovering rapidly, I wish to be removed from here to the mill. I can be well attended there, and it is not right for me either to burden your family or yourself any longer. For your kindness, under the painful circumstances that have befallen me, I shall never cease to be deeply grateful."

The voice of Watson trembled, notwithstanding he strove hard to be firm. Lucy's eyes filled with tears. She attempted to reply, but her lips quivered so much that her words were inarticulate. There was a deep pause for some moments. Then Lucy said, in a low voice, while her eyes rested upon the floor,—

"I will mention what you say to father; but I am sure he will not consent to your leaving here until you are entirely restored to health."

This reply confirmed the doubts and fears of Watson. Both the manner and words of Lucy satisfied his mind, that she desired the relation that existed between them to be changed. That the fact of his having becoming intoxicated again, made her doubt his power to control himself permanently.

"If she think and feel thus," he said to himself, sadly, "she

shall be free as ever. But such thoughts and feelings wrong me. I was led into over-indulgence innocently. From her own hands I received more than one of the glasses that wrought my overthrow. I dreamed not of danger. But, come what will, my future life shall never be stained by a folly like this. 'A wise man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself.'"

As soon as she could speak with her father, Lucy mentioned to him the wish expressed by Watson.

"Are you weary with attending him?" asked Mr. Sandford.

"I trust I shall never grow weary in well-doing," was the evasive reply.

"I trust not, my daughter. But, seriously, is it your wish that Henry be gratified in his desire to be taken to his mill?"

"I do not think it possible for him to have as good attendance there as here."

"Nor I, Lucy."

A silence followed.

"You seem embarrassed about this matter," Mr. Sandford said, after a few moments. "Why is it, Lucy?"

The tears filled into Lucy's eyes, and one or two bright drops glistened on her eye-lashes. Her lips quivered. But she made no reply.

"Is it your wish that he should go there?" Mr. Sandford asked.

"I do not think it would be right to remove him at present," she said, with some effort.

"Then you would not have him removed?"

"Certainly not."

"Of course, then, he will remain where he is," returned the father, "and you can say so to him from me."

"I wish you would say it to him yourself, father."

"I will. But Lucy, why do you feel so embarrassed about this matter?"

"I can hardly tell, father; but my mind is very much oppressed."

"Have you conversed with your mother?"

"No."

"Would it not be well for you to do so?"

Lucy did not reply.

Mr. Sandford went to the room where Watson lay, and after chatting with him for a short time, said—

"Lucy has mentioned that you wished to be removed to your mill."

"Yes," replied the young man. "I am now suffering but little pain, and am out of all danger. I can receive at the mill all the attention I need, and do not, therefore, think it right for me to remain here any longer. For the kindness of yourself and family, I shall never cease to be deeply grateful."

"And to me, especially," said Mr. Sandford, gravely, "for having been the cause of the dreadful accident, from the consequences of which you are still suffering severely."

"You, sir!" ejaculated Watson, in surprise.

"Yes, to me, Henry. I caused you to drink more than you were able to bear. I mixed a delicious and tempting beverage, and induced you, all unconscious of danger, to drink until reason was dethroned. Had you been aware of the strength of what you were drinking, would you have gone so far?"

"No," was the emphatic answer. "I would have cut off my right hand first."

"So I believe. On *my* head, therefore, rests all the blame, and from me and my family must you receive all the attentions you require, until you are fully recovered. It is your right and our duty."

"I cannot, I must not, I will not claim such a right," returned the young man with energy. "I *ought* to have known what I was doing. That I did not, is no fault of yours."

"We may differ on that head," returned Mr. Sandford. "At any rate, you are under our care, and here you must remain until we think it safe for you to be removed."

A deep sigh, or rather groan, was the only reply made by the young man to this. He felt helpless, and miserable.

After Lucy had spoken with her father, she went up into her mother's chamber. Mrs. Sandford was there, and noticed, as her daughter entered, that her countenance was more than usually sad.

"Why do you look so troubled, Lucy?" asked Mrs. Sandford.

Lucy sat down by her mother's side, and leaning her head upon her shoulder, gave way to a passionate fit of weeping. After her feelings had calmed down, her mother said,—

"There is a cause for this, my daughter. Will you tell me why you are so deeply moved?"

Lucy's tears flowed again, freely. In a little while she was able to control herself when she said,—

"Can you wonder, mother, that I do not feel happy? You remember the trials and sufferings of last year;—how shall I bear their repetition. I feel that I cannot."

"Why need they be repeated, Lucy?"

"Like causes, produce like results. The same reason for breaking my engagement with Henry Watson last year, is in full force now."

"Lucy! you cannot be in earnest?"

"I am sadly in earnest, mother. Has he not fallen from the high and honorable position he occupied, and fallen lower than he was before? What hope is there for the future? What security for her who should be so mad as to become his wife?"

"He has fallen, it is true, Lucy, but under circumstances of very strong temptation."

"Such circumstances may exist again. If there was nothing *in him* to be tempted, no matter how strong the allurements might be, he would be safe."

"But consider, Lucy; Mr. Watson is not the only one who was overtaken and overthrown. Charles Graham, and James, and nearly every one who visited our house on Christmas morning, were nearly if not quite as much intoxicated as he."

"I do not see how that alters his case, mother."

"It shows that very peculiar circumstances existed,—such as are never likely to exist again."

"Christmas comes once a year?"

"Well?"

"And once a year father will have his bowl of egg-nog, and urge upon every one to drink. I do not see that the substitute of wine for brandy, has improved its quality at all, or rendered it less an intoxicating drink."

"Nor I, Lucy. But I have the best of reasons for believing that your fears in regard to next Christmas are groundless."

"How so?"

"There will be no more egg-nog in this house."

"Not *wine* egg-nog?"

"No, your father declares, that in this house, from this time forth, nothing that in small or large quantities can intoxicate shall ever be used with his consent."

"Thank God, for that!" exclaimed Lucy, earnestly. "Then there is hope!" The tears fell from her eyes like rain.

"Yes, my child, there is hope for all, now," returned Mrs. Sandford. "Hope even for William, I trust. He always ridiculed the idea of giving up brandy and spirit for wine and beer; and predicted just what has happened. One day I spoke lightly of the total abstinence system, when he replied. 'You may laugh as much as you please, mother, at this tetotalism, but depend upon it, it is the only true system of temperance. Precious little good will be done by giving up a glass of brandy and taking three or four of wine in its place.' And William was right. Your father is an independent, decided, energetic man, and in giving up the use of all intoxicating liquors himself, will not be satisfied to sit down inactive, caring for no one beyond his own immediate circle. Through him, the cause of temperance in our village has suffered injury and disgrace; depend upon it, he will never rest until that injury is repaired and that disgrace removed. Henry, I am persuaded, will go with him hand in hand; he has talents, and is, as you know, quite a brilliant speaker. With the perseverance, age, and influence of the one, and the talents and address of the other, I hope for great results. You have my views of this matter now, Lucy, and I trust that you will think well before you take any rash step."

The words of her mother filled Lucy with surprise, hope and pleasure.

"Do you, indeed, anticipate all this?" she said earnestly.

"Yes, all, my daughter. Your father, you well know, to be earnest and thorough going in all he does. The consequences that have followed the wine egg-nog drinking of Christmas morning, have deeply mortified and pained him. He blames himself severely as the cause of all the disgrace that has been heaped upon the temperance cause, and vows that he will repair all the injury it has sustained through him. Upon Henry, he calculates much; and as soon as he is able to bear it, intends having some serious conversation with him on the subject of the entire reorganization of the society here upon the plan of total abstinence."

Lucy heard all this with delight. She saw that the anticipations of her mother were well founded, and that she had no cause for the painful anxieties and internal shrinkings that she had experienced.

When she again met Watson, there was so marked a change in her feelings that he immediately perceived it, much to his relief of mind. Since the moment he had been brought into the house, after the distressing accident from which he was suffering had occurred, up to the present time, Lucy had not, in any conversation she had held with Mr. Watson, alluded, even remotely, to the cause of that accident. On this subject, she had felt too deeply to trust herself to speak. This silence on the part of Lucy was an indication to Watson that the fact of his having drank too freely was to her a source of deep regret, if not of estrangement from him. And from previous experience, it was but natural for him to conclude that such would be the case. It was on this ground that he objected so strongly to being taken to the house of Mr. Sandford at the time his injuries were received, and it was for the same reason that he proposed the earliest possible removal from his house. The cold manner in which Lucy had received the intimation he gave of a wish to leave the house confirmed all the worst fears he had entertained.

The brief conversation that had taken place between Mr. Sandford and Watson, when it was recalled by the young man, gave his mind some relief. Mr. Sandford had taken a right view of the matter. He was not altogether to blame for the condition he had been in. "If Lucy only understood this," he could not help saying to himself, "she must feel differently from what she does."

When Lucy came into his room sometime afterwards, he felt that she must understand his real position better than she did before, or else why was she so changed? Why was her countenance more cheerful than it had yet been? and why was her voice more tender when she addressed him? In this he was right. The conversation she had held with her mother changed both her views and feelings. She saw that Watson was less to be censured than she had supposed, and that if her father's intentions were such as her mother had said, there was little fear of his not having sufficient influence over her lover to induce him to second his efforts with his whole heart. Once engaged in carrying out in society the principles of total abstinence, and he was safe.

A day or two afterwards, while sitting by Watson, Lucy said, smiling—

"Did you know father had come out a tetotaller?"

"No—Is it true?" replied Watson, quickly.

"Yes; so mother tells me. Nobody in the house has drank anything stronger than tea or coffee since Christmas morning."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the young man in surprise.

"It is wonderful, but not the less true. Father intends, before long, to make a bold effort towards the formation of a society on the principles of total abstinence from everything that intoxicates. He says it is the only kind of society that is worth a copper."

"And your father is right," said Watson.

"Do you think so?" asked Lucy.

"I do, certainly. Wine will intoxicate as well as brandy—intoxication is intemperance. A society that tolerates the drinking of intoxicating liquors, should be called by some other name than a Temperance Society."

"I agree with you perfectly in that," returned Lucy.

"As soon as I am able to get out," said Watson, "I will join in heart and hand, with your father, in what he proposes, and I think we may count on Charles Graham and Pryor, besides half a dozen others I could name."

But it was much longer before he was able to be about again than he or his friends had hoped. The fracture of his thigh had been a compound one, and the healthy formation of bone, and union of the small portions that could be brought into contact, progressed very slowly. His marriage with Lucy was to have taken place in February, but the long anticipated day found him unable to bear his weight upon the injured limb, and the time was postponed indefinitely. No such unfortunate result attended the arrival of Jane's wedding day, which came shortly after. Her marriage with Graham was celebrated at the appointed time, with festivities and rejoicings, but there was neither brandy nor wine at the feast. It was a "cold water wedding," and occasioned all sorts of remarks throughout the village. Dr. Sandford was a good deal annoyed at first by this ultraism of his father, as he styled it, but he was so often called upon to defend the act, although he did not approve of it fully, and in doing so found so many good arguments in favor of the cause he espoused, that he began to see pretty much as his father did, although not prepared to renounce either wine or brandy, which he continued

to indulge in with increasing freedom. More rapidly than is usual for young men occupying his position, and with his force of mind and intelligence, did Doctor Sandford progress in his downward career. The remonstrances and arguments of his father availed not, nor did the tears and entreaties of his mother effect any good. He seemed deaf alike to the one and the other. In a few short months he became so lost to all sense of decency and self respect, as to spend two-thirds of his time in the bar room, talking politics and drinking to the neglect and loss of his practice.

It was three months before Watson was well enough to go out. Long before this, in frequent conference with Mr. Sandford, the plan of a total abstinence society had been digested, which was to be announced as soon as the young man was able to unite with Mr. Sandford in vigorously urging it upon the public attention. Graham, and a few others were likewise familiar with the matter, and ready to co-operate heartily. Before, however, this matter was brought forward, another "cold water wedding" took place at the house of Mr. Sandford. Lucy was led, a willing bride, to the altar. This wedding produced less sensation than the previous one; but people wondered what had come over the family.

"They were always a little queer," said one.

"And always ready to run into extremes," remarked another.

"A year ago, and nothing but the best of brandy would suit Mr. Sandford's notions," replied the first speaker. "He scouted at temperance societies as the most nonsensical things in the world, and pursued a course calculated to ruin one-half the young men in the county. Then he gives up brandy, and turns to using wine, and forcing it upon others with such intemperate freedom, as to make one-half the members of the temperance society drunk, and injure the cause they had been advocating, terribly. And now, nothing but cold water will do! I wonder what crotchet will take possession of his brain next?"

"Dear knows! He is a strange man, make the best of him. It's a pity he can't reform his son, the Doctor. That young man is going to ruin as fast as brandy can carry him. I used to employ him, but I would n't let him doctor my dog now."

"Nor I. He is drunk more than half his time."

"It is very well," remarked the other, with a slight sneer,

"for the old gentleman, after ruining his son, and dear knows how many more, by encouraging them to drink, and ridiculing and opposing all temperance reforms, to use nothing but cold water. It would have done some good if he had tried this years ago. It is rather too late now."

Comments such as these were plentifully made. They did not reach the ears of Mr. Sandford, but it would have mattered little if they had. He would have been totally indifferent to them, so far as actions were concerned.

As soon as all was prepared a meeting was announced, the object of which was declared to be the formation of a temperance society on the total abstinence plan. This produced a strong sensation, both among the brandy and wine drinking portions of the community. The former could now see no particular objection to temperance societies as at first instituted, but the new movement was the wildest piece of ultraism ever heard of. The tavern keepers were particularly active in their efforts to throw ridicule upon the thing. The opposition of the beer, wine and cider drinkers was also strong.

"You will ruin the whole thing," said one of them to Mr. Sandford, "if you attempt tetotalism in this place. The people will not stand it. Do you think I am going to drink nothing but spring water?"

"If you think wine more healthy than water, friend Long, use it. But if water, as a beverage, is really better than wine, I would advise you to let the latter alone, as I do," replied Mr. Sandford.

"Both are good enough in their place."

"I will readily admit that. But I am sure the regular use of any thing that stimulates the system, that quickens the pulsation of the heart, must be injurious. And moreover, I am well convinced, that all efforts to effect the permanent reformation of drunkards upon any other principle than the total abandonment of fermented as well as distilled liquors, will be found unavailing. The desire for stimulating drinks will tempt the man who has abandoned ardent spirits, to use wine, or beer, or cider, so freely as to produce intoxication, or a state so near to it, that his moral sense will be destroyed, and he unable to resist the burning thirst felt under such circumstances for rum or brandy."

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it."

"All a mere assumption, Mr. Sandford, that facts will not bear out."

"The time will come, Mr. Long, when you will see this matter differently."

"Possibly. But I doubt it. Of one thing, however, I am very sure, and that is, that you will do more harm than good if you attempt to form a total abstinence society at this time."

"Why?"

"Every body is up in arms against it."

"Tavern keepers and all, I suppose."

"Every temperance man I have seen, says it will ruin the cause,—that the thing is ridiculous and preposterous."

"There never was any true reform that did not meet with the same kind of opposition from men who professed to believe the principles upon which it was founded. Temperance men! Why, no man deserves the name who pours wine and beer down his throat by the gallon, in place of brandy by the pint. Where is the great difference, pray? I confess myself unable to see it."

"Well, you can do as you please, Mr. Sandford; but I warn you in advance, that you will ruin the cause of temperance in this village if you keep on."

Such were the views held by four-fifths of the temperance men, so called; and they opposed the new movement with vigorous efforts. To most of them, the giving up of ardent spirits had been no great sacrifice, while the whole catalogue of wines and other fermented liquors were left them to select from, and drink without stint or license. But to give up all was a very serious matter, and not to be thought of for a moment.

When the meeting took place, the church where it was held was crowded. Mr. Sandford stated the object for which they had assembled, and showed, briefly, the grounds upon which he and others based their advocacy of entire abstinence from intoxicating drinks as the only sure measure of reformation. This statement was followed by a strong address from Watson in favor of total abstinence principles, and then all persons favorable to the new movement were invited to come forward and sign a pledge which was read aloud.

To the surprise of most persons present, about twenty responded to this call, and subscribed the pledge. A society was then

organized with Mr. Graham as president. When the meeting broke up, the opponents of total abstinence were fewer but much more violent than before.

This took place many years before the Washingtonian movement, and was one of the instances in which the true light broke in here and there as a precursor of the advancing day. As may well be supposed, the fears of the old temperance folks and the predictions of the tavern keepers and their friends, were not realized. The good cause prospered well; and the new society gained strength and numbers every day.

The success of the cause in which he had embarked, would have made old Mr. Sandford happy, had there not been one sad drawback to even peace of mind. His son William was sinking with inconceivable rapidity into the condition of an abandoned sot. A few months had wrought in him a great change. His practice was entirely neglected, and nearly all his time spent in lounging about taverns, or sporting and carousing with young men who had no more respect for themselves than he now seemed to have. Remonstrance was entirely vain. He heard all that his father said in dogged silence, or answered him in anger. The last time he had ventured to say any thing to him, William retorted bitterly, and said—

"If I am a common durnkard as you call me, whose fault is it, ha? Who taught me to drink? Who put the tempting devil to my lips? Ha! Answer me that. I am degraded and disgraced, I know,—but who is to blame?"

Mr. Sandford heard this scathing rebuke, and his head sunk upon his bosom, his thin gray hairs falling over his brow and partly shadowing his face, in which grief and shame had visibly impressed themselves. He made no reply, but sat in the position the words of his son had caused him to assume, speechless.

William looked at his father for some moments, in sorrow for his hastily spoken words. But he had uttered the truth, and it was now too late to recall what he had said. Then arising, he left the room, and, retiring from the house, went direct to his office. The image of his father, in spite of every effort to dispel it, remained pictured in his mind with painful distinctness.

"I was wrong, very wrong," he murmured, sadly to himself; "but why didn't he let me alone? Why does he keep at me

all the time? It is no use. I am doomed to die a drunkard, and he might let me run my course in peace."

His own admission, uttered aloud—an admission that his case was hopeless—startled William, and sent a thrill throughout his moral being.

"Die a drunkard?" he could not help saying, while a shudder passed over him. William Sandford die a drunkard! No—no. Why need that be? I must hold up a little. I must be more moderate. I must abate a few glasses a day. And I will do it. I will take one glass less to-day, and two to-morrow, and three the next day, and so on, until I get to be quite temperate. Yes, that will do. I will let it be seen that I can reform myself without their temperance societies. I 'm sorry for what I said to the old man; but it can 't be helped now. Why did n't he let me alone? I guess I shan't be troubled much more. Let me see, —how many glasses did I take yesterday? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, and two bottles of wine. I 'll drink but seven glasses to-day. I 've had five already; so I must take only two more. A bottle of wine and segars after dinner, and a bottle of wine and segars at night before I go to bed, will come in at their right places. When shall I take the two glasses? Now is as good a time as any other for one of them. It 's more than an hour since I drank."

On arriving at this conclusion, Doctor Sandford took up his hat and left his office with the intention of going to a bar-room near by and getting a glass of brandy and water. On his way thither he fell in with two or three of his young companions, who went with him to get a drink. Each took a glass of brandy and water, and then sat down to read the newspapers, or chat about matters and things peculiarly interesting to themselves. In about twenty minutes, one of the company threw down the newspaper he was reading, and rising up, said—

"Come, boys; Tom, here, makes glorious juleps. I have n't had a julep to-day. Tom, juleps for four."

No objection was, of course, made.

"I can take one more glass," thought Dr. Sandford, as he straightened himself up, preparatory to imbibing his julep—"that will make seven."

As he said this to himself, he could not help thinking that it would be a good while before he could take another glass. It was then nearly one o'clock.

While sipping the julep, and enjoying its peculiar flavor, Sandford recollected that he had made no allowance for brandy and water at dinner time, a thing absolutely indispensable. This troubled his mind for a moment or two; but he settled the matter by coming to a sudden resolution to defer the diminishing system until the next morning, when he could begin fair, and leave room for all the contingencies that might occur during the day. He felt a sensation of relief immediately. He breathed more freely. There was a sense of liberty.

After taking the julep that the bar keeper had prepared with a skill peculiarly his own, our young men left the tavern and took a short stroll, which brought them to another drinking house, which was famous for "sherry cobblers." Sandford proposed a drink, to which the rest assented. The "cobblers" were pronounced "first rate," and a second round called for. After this the young men separated and Sandford went home to dinner. Nine glasses since morning had not left his mind in a very lucid condition; still, he could remember with some distinctness the unpleasant words that had passed between himself and his father, and felt some reluctance, on that account, to meeting him. When he came in, his father looked him calmly in the face, and spoke to him pleasantly. He saw that his son had been drinking as usual, and evidently, with more freedom, and he was pained as he ever was at such evidences of his speedy ruin.

When they all had assembled at the dinner table, William noticed that the bottle of brandy which he had always required to be set on for him, was not in its usual place, and turning to the servant who waited on the table, he rebuked him in a severe tone for the omission. The servant did not reply, but looked towards Mr. Sandford. The old man turned his eyes upon his son, and regarded him for a moment steadily but mournfully,—

"William," he said,—"I have placed a tempting devil to your lips for the last time. From this hour, henceforth and forever, no one can drink any thing in my house, or at my table that intoxicates."

The young man pushed back his chair instantly and rising from the table, left the room. His mother was about following him, but a look from her husband restrained her.

No remark was made by any one, on the occurrence, but all felt troubled, and no one eat with appetite. The meal was concluded in silence.

Angry and indignant as Doctor Sandford was when he left the table, and confused as his perceptions were from the effects of nine glasses before dinner, he was yet sane enough to be conscious that his father was right to act as he had done, especially after what he had said to him in the morning. He went from the dining room into the parlor, and sat there for about five minutes reflecting, as clearly as his half-drunken condition would permit, upon the state of affairs. A crisis had arived—that was plain. How was he to meet it? That was not so readily determined.

Unable to come to any conclusion, he left the house, before any of the family had risen from the dinner table, and went to his office. To make up for the lost meal, he drank two bottles of wine instead of one, and smoked with corresponding freedom. The consequence may be readily inferred. He became thoroughly intoxicated, and was found towards evening, by some friend who happened to step in, lying under the office table, asleep. An attempt to arouse him showed his true condition. He was "dead drunk." The friend was humane enough to lift him from the floor and lay him upon a cushioned settee, that the office contained. His humanity went no further. He left him where he laid him, and did not go near him again.

It was midnight when Doctor Sandford awoke from the deep sleep into which he had fallen. All was dark and cold around him. He lay for some time endeavoring to collect his thoughts, before he fully comprehended where he was. A groan marked the moment when his mind became clear, for then he had an acute perception of the height from which he had fallen, and the deep pit of disgrace and degradation in which he lay. When he attempted to rise, a severe pain commenced throbbing in his temples, causing him to throw himself back upon the settee where he was lying, with another groan, that mental rather than bodily anguish occasioned. The position resumed, did not cause the pain that had been awakened to subside. It continued to throb on with increasing violence.

For many hours before the day broke did Dr. Sandford thus lay, in darkness, cold and pain, a prey to shame and self-reproaches. When the morning at last dawned, he arose and left his office—for what? To get a glass of brandy! He felt wretched in body and mind, and could think of no quicker remedy than spirits and water. In fact, he believed it to be absolutely necessary for him.

After swallowing a glass of brandy at the nearest tavern he returned to his office, feeling much better. The pain in his head had nearly subsided, his nervous system was firmer, and his mind clearer,—still he felt uncomfortable enough.

"So much for my first attempt at reform," he said to himself, bitterly. "But shall I give up? No, I can and will regulate myself. I have been drinking too freely for my good. I will taper off gradually, and let it alone altogether, perhaps. I believe it would be much better for me to do so. To-day, I will drink but seven glasses and two bottles of wine. On that I am resolved."

Instead of going to his father's house at breakfast time, Doctor Sandford went and engaged boarding at a hotel. He did not really blame his father for what he had done, but his pride was wounded by the occurrence of the preceding day;—and pride viewed the act of withdrawing the brandy bottle as an insult.

After breakfast a second glass of liquor was taken and counted two. Before he could get back to his office, some companion of the class "hale fellow, well met," got hold of him and would hear to no objection against a "cobbler." This made three before ten o'clock in the morning.

"I shall take but one glass more until dinner time." He said to himself as he turned from the bar-room. But he was mistaken. Full seven glasses, the proposed complement for the day, were disposed of before he sat down to dine.

"What am I to do?" he asked himself, as he took his place at the table. "I must have my brandy and water, and yet I have had seven glasses already. Confound Tom, Dick, and Harry for asking me to drink!" Seven glasses had not left the mind of Doctor Sandford very clear, nor his resolution very strong. "Oh well! never mind," he continued, "I need n't begin until to-morrow. A day is of no consequence. "Waiter!" he said aloud, "bring me some brandy."

The brandy was brought, and the resolution for that day broken. It is not a matter of much wonder, that night found the Doctor pretty much in the same condition that he was in on the previous evening.

To Mrs. Sandford, the fact that William had left the house in anger, was a source of deep grief, that his remaining away made deeper and more poignant. Mr. Sandford had conferred with her

about removing the brandy from the dinner-table, and the act was done with her approval and consent. She did not suppose, however, that the effect produced would be so serious. William, she doubted not, would be angry, but she had not supposed, for a moment, that he would leave the house and remain away. His doing so, and the fact of his going to a tavern to board, when she heard of that, caused the feeble hope of reform that she had, as a mother, fondly cherished, to sink low, and almost expire in her bosom. Days and weeks passed, and he came not to see her, nor did she hear from him, except casually, and then the intelligence was painful, instead of consoling. He was still walking the path of ruin with rapid strides.

As for the young man, all his efforts to lead a sober life, by daily lessening the quantity of liquor he drank, proved of no avail. For nearly a month he made every recurring day the beginning of a period of reform, and fixed upon it a limit as to the number of glasses he would drink; but not once during the time did he fail to go beyond the limit. There was always the occurrence of some particular circumstances that made the breaking of his resolution for the day necessary, and night generally found him two thirds, if not fully intoxicated.

One day, it was nearly two months from the time of his leaving, in anger, his father's house, he entered his office on returning, not from seeing a patient, but from the tavern, and found his mother sitting there and waiting for him. He had not seen her face since he turned from the house in anger, but he had often thought of her.

"Mother!" he said, advancing quickly, and grasping her hand. "How do you do? I am glad to see you!"

"William, my son, why have you not called to see me?" she said, looking him earnestly in the face. "I have done you no wrong."

"No, mother, you have not. But——"

He hesitated.

"Nor has any one at home done you wrong. Do you think so?"

"I—I—ye—yes," he stammered out.

"No, William, if you reflect calmly, you must acknowledge that no one in your father's house has ever acted towards you except with kindness.

"I think father acted harshly towards me," said William.

"Anger may think so, but reason must come to a different conclusion. What your father did, I approved; and if my own feelings and wishes had been consulted, it would have been done long before. It was wrong in us to place brandy upon our table for any one to drink, from the moment we became satisfied that its habitual use was a practice fraught with great danger,—and doubly wrong to place it before our son, already nearly overmastered by its potent, soul-destroying influences. Let your reason speak, and answer me, William, if what I say is not true?"

The mother spoke with earnestness and much feeling. Her voice was tremulous, and tears were in her eyes.

Reason did speak, and it could do no less than approve what the mother said. But pride was strong, and opposed all confession of error. The young man was silent, his eyes cast upon the floor.

Mrs. Sandford waited for some time, in order to let her son's mind act upon what she had said. As he made no reply, but continued to sit with his eyes cast down, she resumed and said,—

"William, I wish you to go home with me. It is now our regular hour for dining, and I wish to see you in your place at the table. It has been vacant, day after day, for two months; but I can bear it no longer. Come, my son!"

"Not to-day, mother," replied the young man, sensibly disturbed by the invitation to return home.

"Why not to-day? You cannot, you must not remain away from us altogether! Then, why not return to day, William?"

"I—I—I am to meet some friends at dinner," was answered, after some hesitation, and in such a manner as to lead Mrs. Sandford to doubt its being the truth.

"Better friends await you in your father's house," was her prompt reply. "Come, then. The way is plain before you—will you not walk in it? You left us in causeless anger, and have nursed, it seems, that anger ever since. You would not come near us. You thought not,—oh! let me not say, cared not—for the grief your mother's heart would feel. But, regardless of all this, your mother comes to you, and asks you to return again and fill your long vacant place. Let her not ask in vain."

As she said this, Mrs. Sandford arose, adding, as she did so,—

"Come, William, you must go with me."

"To-morrow I will do so, mother."

"Why not to-day?"

"I can't, indeed! Give me until to-morrow."

"Now is the best time," urged Mrs. Sandford.

Still the young man persisted in putting off until the next day his return home.

"I am to expect you to-morrow, then?" said the mother, at length turning reluctantly to go.

"Yes, I will certainly dine with you to-morrow!"

In sadness and oppression of feeling did Mrs. Sandford leave her son's office, and turn her slow steps homeward. William had changed much since she last saw him, and changed for the worse, both in face and general appearance. She felt almost hopeless of his being saved from ruin, so rapid, it was evident, was his downward tendency. As soon as his mother left his office the young man shook his head and said,—

"No—no—not to-day. I have been drinking too much. But to-morrow I will go, and go sober. I will limit myself to three glasses before dinner, and nothing shall tempt me to touch more. I shall have to do without my brandy and water, I suppose, but no matter, I can do without it."

Anxiously did Mrs. Sandford look for the coming of dinner-time on the next day—hope and fear in alternate possession of her mind. The hour at length arrived, but William did not come. The family waited for half an hour, but he was still absent, when they at last took their places at the table. Mrs. Sandford was a strong-minded woman, and she bore, with but little exhibition of what she suffered, this severe disappointment. When she retired, at the conclusion of the meal, she went up into her chamber, and closing the door, locked it after her, and sunk down, weeping, upon her knees. She remained in this position for a long time. When she arose, her face was calmer, and her tears dried up. She left her room and went about her ordinary duties, and no one could perceive that she had but lately been in a passion of grief.

As for Doctor Sandford, it was as might be supposed. His effort to "regulate" himself was altogether useless. The first glass he drank in the morning took away its proper proportion of self-control. The second was like unto the first; and his third glass, which was to be the forenoon limit, only paved the way for a fourth, which was taken in place of the brandy and water that

was to be omitted at dinner time. After that, the temptations to drink came rushing on him like a flood. By two o'clock he was asleep in one of the taverns to which he resorted, with his head upon the reading table, too much intoxicated to have walked without staggering, had he been awake. A friend found him in this condition, and had him taken to the hotel at which he boarded and put to bed, where he lay until the next morning.

On awaking from this besotted condition, it took Sandford sometime to bring up from his memory's dim repository all the facts of the preceding day. When his recollection did become clear, he suffered more real anguish of spirits than he had, perhaps, ever known. The visit of his mother had affected him much more than she had supposed, and he was earnest in the matter of rejoining his family at dinner time on the succeeding day. That day had passed, and his promise had not been fulfilled.

"Miserable, degraded wretch that I am!" he said, and groaned in anguish of spirit as he threw himself back upon his pillow, from which he had raised himself while seeking to remember the events of the preceding day.

"I would not have broken my word to her for the world," he added, sorrowfully. "Ah, me! how low I have fallen! Would to heaven I had never known the taste of liquor! But for this accursed infatuation, I might now be happy and useful as I am unhappy and a cumberer of the ground."

As he said this, he raised his hand to the bell rope that hung over his bed, for the purpose of ordering a glass of brandy to steady his nerves and allay the dreadful cravings of his stomach for something stimulating. It was an involuntary act; done without the consciousness that he was execrating at the moment the cup he was about to put to his lips. But the thought of what he was doing, came before the bell was rung, and his arm fell beside him as he exclaimed,—

"Madman!—No! Touch not!—taste not!—handle not! Here anchor your barque, well nigh dashed to pieces on the breakers, or you are lost!"

He then sunk down lower upon his pillow—in fact, buried up his face in it, feeling as powerless as an infant—and there he lay and wept the first tears that had warmed his cheek since he had called himself a man. To this state succeeded one of calmness,

reflection, hope, and resolutions more firmly based than any he had yet made.

"It must come to that," he murmured half aloud—alluding to total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. "There is, for me, no other way of safety. And it shall come to that. Solemnly do I vow, in this hour of bitterness and grief of soul, never again to let one drop of wine or spirit to pass my lips. It is said, and my vow shall be kept."

The repentant young man now arose, and with trembling hands dressed and prepared himself for breakfast. He found his nerves in a dreadfully shattered condition; far more so than he had dreamed, for a glass of brandy taken every morning immediately on rising, had given them an artificial steadiness and concealed their real state.

On descending to the bar-room to wait for breakfast, the first salutation he met was,

"Good morning, Doctor! Come, what will you take?"

This was from a friend who boarded at the same house.

"A cup of strong coffee as soon as I can get it," replied Sandford. "Nothing else."

"Why, what 's the matter? Are you sick?"

"Yes."

"Where are you sick?"

"Here and here." And he laid his hand first on his heart and then on his head.

"Do you think coffee will do you more good than a glass of brandy?"

"Yes,—or, at least it will do me less harm."

"Oh!" And with this ejaculation, and a peculiar expression of face, the friend turned from him, and walking to the bar, ordered his morning glass.

Doctor Sandford continued to feel very wretched. A sensation of sinking at the stomach and faintness was particularly distressing. It seemed to him as if the breakfast bell never would ring; but at last he heard the welcome sound.

A cup of coffee helped him even more than he had expected. His nerves became steadier and he eat lightly and with as good, if not a better appetite than usual.

On leaving the breakfast table, and passing through the bar-room, he was again asked to drink, but he gave a simple nega-

tive, and left the house. He went direct to his office, with the intention of not leaving it that day, except to go to his meals.

Mrs. Sandford had caused particular enquiries to be made about William, and learned, much to her grief, that at the time she was expecting him to dinner, he was so much intoxicated as to be insensible. She was sitting alone with her husband about ten o'clock on the succeeding day, in earnest conversation. The subject of that conversation was their infatuated son.

"We must do something to induce him to come home," the mother said. "Removed, as he is now, from all restraint, such as an association with his family cannot fail to bring, he is sinking with fearful rapidity. If he can be held up at all—if he can be reclaimed—it must be by home influences. These, and these alone, will have sufficient power."

Mr. Sandford made no reply. He felt deeply the force of what had been said, but he did not see how William was to be brought home. He had gone away in anger at an act which could not be recalled. While he sat in silence and anxious thought, the door of the room in which they sat was quietly opened, and the object of their solicitude entered.

"William!" ejaculated the mother. She could say no more, but trembled from head to foot.

"I am glad to see you once more, my son," said Mr. Sandford, with dignified kindness, advancing towards the young man and giving him his hand. "As ever, you are welcome home."

The manner of this reception, different from what he had expected from his father, touched William's feelings. He took the offered hand, and, as he did so, said in a tremulous voice—

"Forgive my ingratitude and unjust anger! You were right and I was wrong."

"Say no more, my son. It is enough. You have my free forgiveness. To err is human. Your absence has made us all unhappy;—may your return bring back to us the sunshine that has for awhile been withdrawn from our dwelling."

"God grant that it may," responded the young man, fervently.

The mother stood in tears and bewildered. She saw that her son was sober, and that there was a great change in him.

"Father," said William, after a pause. "I have this day come to a full stop in my insane career. From this day, hence-

forth and forever, I cut myself loose from the accursed evil of drinking. Had I done it long ago, I would have saved health, happiness and worldly prosperity, which are all shipwrecked—or nearly so."

"It is never too late, my son," said Mr. Sandford, his whole manner changing, and a glad smile lighting up his face—"never too late. If you stand where you say you do, all is safe,—health, happiness, and worldly prosperity are still yours. The future is yet bright with hope. The past may be forgotten. But are you prepared not only to renounce all that intoxicates, but to unite yourself with those of us who have put our hands to the good work of reform?"

"Yes, and at once," was the prompt reply. "I need all the aid of association, pledges, and activity to sustain me amid temptation, and I will seek this aid gladly. If you have the pledge of your society here, I will immediately subscribe my name to it."

Mr. Sandford turned to his secretary, and taking therefrom the pledge, laid it upon a table before his son, who signed it, eagerly.

"All is bright now!" said the old man, with emotion. "The clouds have opened themselves, and the bright sunshine has again visited our dwelling."

The tears stole out from his eyes, and moved slowly over his time-worn cheeks. The mother was already weeping, and William wept with them. But the tears that mingled there were tears of joy and hope.

Two months more and Christmas has come round again. Merry old Christmas! It is just peep-o'-day, but all are stirring in the dwelling of our old friend Mr. Sandford. The festive board is laden with good cheer as usual; but where for years has stood the huge punch bowl, now glistens a hissing urn.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Yes, there they are, the merry Christmas boys again! The echoes of their double-charged guns ring back from the distant hills, and the welkin is alive with their wild hurrahs. Open fly the doors, and, "A merry Christmas!" is shouted by a dozen voices. Mr. Sandford never looked happier, and Mrs. Sandford's face is a wreath of smiles.

The guns are quickly deposited in a corner of the room, and now the whole company have gathered around the table, and hot

coffee from the urn is found to be quite as mirth-inspiring as egg-nog. Doctor Sandford is among the number, though not of the morning gun party. He has a quiet, subdued, yet cheerful expression of face, and sips his coffee with a pleasure more real than he ever felt in the use of stronger and more enticing drinks.

"A song, Charley," calls out old Mr. Sandford. "There is as fine music in an urn of good coffee as in a barrel of egg-nog; and finer, too, for it leaves all the pipes clear. Come, Charley! We must have a song, and let it be a good one."

Graham was not one to hesitate. With a bold free voice he sang:

WATER!—OH! WATER FOR ME.

"Oh! water for me—bright water for me!
And wine for the tremulous debauchee!
It cooleth the brow, it cooleth the brain,
It maketh the faint one strong again;
It comes o'er the sense like a breeze from the sea,
All freshness, like infant purity.
Oh water, bright water, for me, for me!
Give wine, give wine to the debauchee!

"Fill to the brim! fill, fill to the brim!
Let the flowing crystal kiss the rim;
For my hand is steady, my eye is true,
For I, like the flowers, drink naught but dew.
Oh! water, bright water 's a mine of wealth,
And the ores it yieldeth are vigor and health.
So water, pure water for me, for me!
And wine for the tremulous debauchee!

"Fill again to the brim—again to the brim!
For water strengthens life and limb;
To the days of the aged it addeth length,
To the might of the strong it addeth strength;
It freshens the heart, it brightens the sight—
'Tis like quaffing a goblet of morning light.
So water, I 'll drink naught but thee
Thou parent of health and energy!

"When o'er the hills, like a gladsome bride,
Morning walks forth in her beauty's pride,
And leading a band of laughing hours,
Brushes the dew from the nodding flowers
Oh! cheerily then my voice is heard,
Mingling with that of the soaring bird,

Who flingeth abroad his matins loud,
As he freshens his wings in the cold grey cloud.

"But when evening has quitted her sheltering yew
Drowsily flying, and weaving anew
Her dusky meshes o'er land and sea.
How gently, oh! Sleep, fall thy poppies on me!
For I drink water, pure, cold and bright,
And my dreams are of heaven the live-long night.
So, hurrah for thee, water, hurrah, hurrah!
Thou art silver and gold, thou art ribbon and star,
Hurrah for bright water! hurrah! hurrah!"

"A first-rate drinking song! There can be none better. I would n't give it for a dozen of your 'flowing bowls,' and 'vine-wreathed bumpers.' After all, there is nothing to compare with Adam's ale. It is nature's own beverage, and truly

'Cooleth the brow and cooleth the brain.'

I feel younger than I did this day twelve-month, by at least ten years."

Thus speaks old Mr. Sandford, and all warmly responded to his sentiments.

There is no running away of horses and breaking of bones to-day,—no disgraceful intoxication, with sorrow and disappointment following hard after. No one is absent from the dinner-table, where toasts are drunk in sparkling water, and when evening comes round, all again assemble and spend the hours with music and games, and cheerful talk. This, before, has never been. When Christmas night came round in former times, but few of the young men were in a condition to be seen, and wisely hid themselves from the eyes of those they loved and respected most. An old friend or two dropped in to see Mr. Sandford, and chatted and drank with him for an hour or two,—the girls usually retired, lonely and weary, to their chambers, and sought their pillows long before the usual time, and Mrs. Sandford did the same.

It was different now. Heads were as clear and hearts as light as when morning broke over the earth with its cheerful rays. And thus it has been ever since. Christmas is still a season of festivities at the house of Mr. Sandford, although the crash of guns no longer ushers in the opening day. The principles

espoused by himself and family, and firmly carried out, soon found numerous advocates, and it was not long before every man in the village who named the name of temperance with approval, adopted them as his own. Doctor Sandford remained true to his good resolves. He quickly gained the position he had lost, and now has the largest practice of any physician in the county.

THE LOST CHILDREN.

A DAY in autumn was about expiring. The morning had been warm and bright with sunshine, but evening was gathering its shadows amid clouds, fierce driving wind and rain. A fit emblem was this expiring day, of the closing life of one whose early years had passed in light and smiles, but whose later experiences were full of bitterness.

A mother lay upon her dying bed. In the chamber of death were three persons besides the sufferer. One was a man in the prime of life, whose face bore many evidences of the evil habits that had cursed both himself and his family. The other two were children; one a girl between ten and eleven, and the other a boy not beyond his seventh year. The father sat by the bed, holding the thin white hand of her whom he had promised, years before, to love and cherish with the tenderest affection; and while he did so, the rebuking past came back, and the sting of an upbraiding conscience troubled him deeply. The little boy had climbed upon the bed, and was lying close to his mother, with his arm thrown across her bosom; and the girl stood with her face buried in a pillow. She was weeping.

A deep silence had pervaded the chamber for nearly half an hour. In that oppressive half hour, how many troubled thoughts had passed through the mind of the unhappy man who was about losing one whose virtues, whose patience, whose sufferings, whose wrongs, were all remembered now, although they had been little thought of through the last few years of his wedded life!

"Henry!" The man started—raised his eyes from the floor, and turned them upon the face of his dying wife, who looked at him earnestly for some moments, and then said—"Henry, when I am gone, these dear children will have no one to love them, no one to care for them, but you."

"I will both love them and care for them," quickly returned the man. His voice trembled, and he spoke with emotion.

"I leave them in your hands," resumed the mother, speaking more solemnly, "a priceless legacy. Two immortal souls—two innocent, helpless ones, who, in the sight of the angels, are precious beyond imagination. Oh, Henry! love them and guard them from evil, for my sake. When you look upon them, think of me; and think of me as present; for my love, it may be, will bring me nearer to you all, even though you cannot see me."

The strong man was deeply moved by this appeal. He bent over and hid his face on the bed, while a tremor passed through his frame, and his eyes, that were all unused to weeping, ran over with tears. When he looked up, after five minutes or more had passed—a period of deep silence—he was startled by the hue of death that overspread the face of his wife. He called her name eagerly, but she did not hear him; he grasped her hand, that was covered with a clammy sweat, but she did not appear to feel the touch. The tears that fell like rain over the face of the mother and wife; the voices so full of anguish, that called her name, had no power to bring her back again to mortal consciousness. The silver chord was loosened and the golden bowl was broken! The mother had passed away from her children—the wife had parted from her husband.

Next we find Henry Altemas alone. He has left the chamber of death, and retired to another apartment to weep—to muse sadly over the past—to repent—to form good resolutions. There had been enough of evil in his life: and there had been enough of consequent suffering to others. From comfort, ease and competence, he had reduced his family to want, privation and suffering. Step by step, through a course of five years of dissipation, he descended lower and lower, until the hope of change failed in the heart of his long suffering wife, whose patient spirit was never betrayed into the utterance of rebuke. Alone, under such circumstances, with such memories to haunt him! Alas, unhappy man! The bitterness of one hour thus spent; how does it overbalance all the pleasures of sensual excesses, even though indulged in for years! Dearly bought are they at such a price!

Those who came in to take charge of the cold remains of her who had risen into a truer and a better life, removed the children, Alice and Henry, to another room, where they remained for a long time alone: the boy held tightly to the bosom of his sister.

Young as they were, their life-experience had been such that a double desolation fell upon their hearts at the loss they had sustained. It was long since they had drawn near their father with love—long since they had lain their heads, as of old, upon his breast, and felt the sweet joy of knowing that he loved them. To them, their mother had been every thing; she was now taken away, and they felt indeed alone.

On the day following, the dead was carried out, and then a still deeper desolation was felt by the sorrowing children. As for the father, his repentance was sincere, and his resolutions of amendment earnest. But, he did not understand the value of total abstinence as a means of reformation—as, in fact, the only means of reformation. How utterly fruitless were all his good resolutions, we need hardly say. They were like cords of gossamer on the arms of a strong man. On the very day that the sad rites of burial were performed over the body of the departed one, he tasted the cup of confusion. To taste, was to drink deeply. It was the old story. Henry Altemas returned, that night, to his little ones, as he had too often returned before, half insensible from intoxication. They had waited for him an hour past their usual bedtime; and it was to meet him thus! Alice looked up anxiously into her father's face as he came in. One glance sufficed. Her eyes were too familiar with the sad, humiliating evidences of her parent's degrading vice, not to perceive, in an instant, that he had again fallen. The father did not speak to or even notice his children, as he staggered into the room where they were sitting, and then staggered out again, and groped his way along the passage and up the stairs into his now desolate chamber. But he did not feel its desolation.

Alice, as soon as her father left the room, took little Henry's hand, and rising, said in a low voice, that was composed by a strong effort—

"Come, brother."

The child rose up and went with his sister. Henry was not long awake after his head pressed its pillow, but Alice did not sleep for more than an hour, and when slumber at length sealed her young eyelids, troubled dreams were her companions through the night.

At breakfast time, on the next morning, Mr. Altemas met his children in shame and silence. Alice took the place at table

which had been left vacant by her mother's death, and served the coffee. She looked frequently at her father, but his eyes were not once directed to the face of his child. He could not look at her. He sat only about half his usual time at the table, and then rose and went out. Alice tried, but could not eat; and soon after her father left, got up and went into another room, the door of which she closed, and then sitting down in a dark corner, covered her face with her hands and wept bitterly. Henry soon found her out, and crouching down beside her, mingled with hers his tears, although he scarcely knew for what reason he was weeping.

Mr. Altemas went out with a fixed determination not to drink a drop of any thing. He felt deeply mortified at having been betrayed into excess on the very day that he had followed the remains of his wife to the grave; and especially so, when he remembered that his children had seen him come staggering in at night—the children whom he had promised his dying wife to love and care for in her stead. He could not look into their innocent faces when he met them at the breakfast table, although he was conscious that their eyes were upon him; and he withdrew from their presence as quickly as possible.

Mr. Altemas had been a successful merchant, but dissipation caused him to neglect his business, which, after a while, tumbled in ruins around him. He was now a clerk in the receipt of a small salary, that had proved insufficient to meet the wants of his family, as well as supply the cravings of a vitiated appetite. From his house he went to the store at which he was employed, and attended to business until about eleven o'clock, the time at which he generally went into a neighboring tavern to get a drink. The usual hour brought the usual desire for liquors. This was, for a while, resisted; but the first effort at resistance made the desire tenfold stronger. The struggle was but brief. Evil allurements were too powerful to be withstood—Mr. Altemas turned aside as usual to taste the cup of pleasure, and he again fell. That night he did not return until late. His children were in bed and asleep when he came in. He would have sought his home earlier, but he feared that they might be again sitting up for him.

Thus it went on, daily, in the old way. Night after night the unhappy man came home, sometimes early and sometimes late,

but always more or less intoxicated. In the morning he was silent when he met his children at the breakfast table; and his countenance generally wore a gloomy aspect. At dinner time he was in a pleasanter mood; but at tea time, when he did come home, he was more than half stultified by drink. Thus he passed before his children at three brief intervals during the day, and that was all they saw of him. There was nothing to call out their affection; nothing to make them look for his coming with pleasure. Alice grew old rapidly; not by the lapse of time, but by suffering. The loss of her mother, the neglect and errors of her father, and the tender years of her brother, who looked up to her and depended upon her for every thing, changed her, in a very short time almost from a child into a woman. She took the entire charge of Henry, because there was now no one else to do do it. The hired domestic cared little for any thing around her, in such an ill-regulated household, with no observant head, took any privilege she happened to desire.

Things had proceeded in this way for about six months, when the employer of Mr. Altemas becoming out of all patience with him on account of his irregular habits, and consequent neglect of business, discharged him from his service. For three weeks the miserable man tried, but in vain, to procure another situation. At the end of this time, on coming home one day, more sober than usual, he called Alice to him, and said, speaking with some feeling—

"Alice, I find that I shall be obliged to leave the city. But I hope to be back soon. While I am gone, you and Henry are to stay with Mrs. Walton in Division street, who promises to be very kind to you."

The only reply made by Alice to this announcement was a gush of tears. She wept for some time. At last, looking up into her father's face she said—

"Oh papa, don't go away!"

"I must go, dear," replied Mr. Altemas, who was moved by the child's distress. "I can get nothing to do in this city; but where I am going, I will find employment, and then I will soon come for you and Henry. You must be good children while I am gone."

Alice made an effort to dry her tears and look cheerful. But a weight remained upon her heart. She did not know who Mrs. Walton was. She had never heard her name before.

"Will Mrs. Walton be good to Henry?" she asked.

"Oh yes. She will be very kind to both you and Henry, I am sure," quickly replied the father.

"When must we go there?"

"In the morning. I told her I would bring you to her house to-morrow morning."

Alice said no more. In a little while she went out of the room, and stole up quietly to the chamber that had been her mother's. After closing the door she looked around upon each familiar object that brought back most vividly the memory of her who had died in that room; for only a few moments did she thus stand; then she seated herself by the bed, and bending forward hid her face in her hands. She did not now give way to tears; but oh! how lonely she felt—how desolate her heart! Soon after, Mr. Altemas came up and entered the room. He saw Alice, and instantly retired. There was a deep rebuke in her attitude, as well as in her presence in her mother's chamber at that time. Half an hour afterwards, he re-entered the room and saw Alice in the same position. He again paused, instinctively, and was about retiring; but he checked himself and came into the chamber. Alice did not move. He called her name, but there was no response, except in a long fluttering sigh, or sob. On coming nearer to her, he found that she was asleep. The feelings of the unhappy father, already disturbed, were now deeply moved.

For a moment he gazed earnestly upon her form. He could not help reading in her condition, the story of deep suffering; of a heart sensible of a great wrong, and apprehension of still greater misery in the future. His thoughts ran back to former happier days. A new pang shot through his heart as he recollected the high hopes, the smiling friends, and unalloyed happiness of that hour when he led her mother, now at rest, to the altar. And then the very image of his wife seemed to fill the room; her form and features were stamped on every thing around, and so true, so life-like, he could hardly resist the impression of reality. Involuntarily he closed his eyes, as if to test the illusion; but clearer, brighter, plainer, stood his wife before him. Was she there to reproach him?

The thought was maddening. His heart beat with a violence almost suffocating, and his brain grew painfully giddy. Then,

as in previous troubles, his mind reverted to the usual panacea—intoxication. The thought instantly peopled the place with all the horrid spectres so familiar to nerves shattered by alcoholic stimulus; yet even these were a relief. Any thing he could endure better than the presence of child or wife, real or imaginary.

"Wretched man that I am!" he murmured, in bitterness of spirit, as he turned away, and left the chamber, the very atmosphere of which oppressed him. He not only left the chamber but the house, and paused not until he breathed a grosser and more congenial atmosphere—that of a drinking house, where he drowned, in strong potations, the stern voice of an upbraiding conscience.

On the next morning the children were removed to the dwelling of Mrs. Walton in Division street. A vendue, that had already been advertised, was held at the house of Mr. Altemas on the same day, and every article of furniture sold. Not even the mother's work box, beautifully inlaid with costly woods, a husband's present in happier days, was reserved for Alice. All passed under the hammer. Fifty dollars of the proceeds of this sale were paid into the hands of Mrs. Walton in advance for the children's board, and the balance, about two hundred dollars, Mr. Altemas placed in his pocket, and after parting with his children, started for New Orleans. In Baltimore he remained for a few days; long enough to have his pocket-book stolen from him while he was intoxicated. In this were a hundred dollars in bills. Luckily, it happened that the rest of his money was in gold, and contained in a purse, that escaped the search of the person who robbed him. From Baltimore, he pushed on by the quickest route to New Orleans. Three weeks after his arrival, he was without a dollar and without employment; and there we will leave him and return to Alice and her brother.

Mrs. Walton received the children, when brought to her, with a great show of kindness; but Alice felt that nothing of all this came from the heart. Both the woman's appearance and manners were repulsive to her, and she could not bear to come near her. Henry seemed to feel as she did, for he fixed his eyes upon her, half-fearfully, and shrunk close to the side of his sister.

"Dear little fellow!" said Mrs. Walton, putting her hand upon Henry's head; but the child drew closer to his sister, and seemed to shrink from her touch as if it had been a blow.

"He is a timid child, and strange now," said the father; "but he will soon feel himself at home with you."

"O yes! I'll soon make him feel at home; dear little fellow!" returned Mrs. Walton, smoothing his hair, while Henry continued to cower beneath the touch of her hand. All the time his eyes were fixed intently upon her face.

Mrs. Walton was a widow, somewhere in the neighborhood of fifty, who kept a third-rate boarding-house. She had agreed with Mr. Altemas to take his two children at a charge of three dollars a week, and he had promised to advance her fifty dollars —a part of which she was to lay out in clothing for them—and also to remit her more money by the time that sum was exhausted. Mrs. Walton, we are sorry to say, was rather a bad specimen of a woman. She was selfish, coarse and vulgar-minded, unfeeling and hypocritical. Some ten years of rough contact with the world as the keeper of a cheap boarding-house, during which time she had come into close proximity with all sorts of people, had in no way tended to improve her character. In worse hands Mr. Altemas could hardly have left his children.

"You can stay here and amuse yourselves," said Mrs. Walton to Alice and Henry, after their father had retired, and then she hurried away, leaving them in the dark and dingy room which she called the parlor. Henry leaned his head against his sister, and said in a sad voice—

"I wish papa would n't leave us here."

"We shan't be here very long, I hope," returned Alice. "Papa says he will come and take us away soon."

Although Alice spoke thus encouragingly to her brother, her own heart had no confidence in the words she uttered. To her, the future had a dark and uncertain aspect, and she felt an inward, shrinking fear, as she looked into it. It was about ten o'clock when their father left them at the house of Mrs. Walton. They remained alone in the parlor, not stirring from where they had at first seated themselves, until nearly two o'clock, when they were called to dinner. Henry had slept during a portion of these unhappy hours. The afternoon was spent, as the morning had been, in the parlor, alone. At night they were taken up into a small garret room to sleep. The room was comfortable enough, and so was the bed that it contained.

On the next morning the father called to see them early. He was to leave for the south at nine o'clock.

"Oh, papa! Don't stay away long," said Alice, her eyes filling with tears.

"I will be back for you very soon," he replied.

"How soon?" asked Henry, as he held on tightly to his father's hand.

"I cannot exactly tell. But it will be very soon.'

"In a month?" asked Alice.

"I hope so."

"A month is four weeks. It will be so long!" said Henry. "Come back sooner, papa, won't you, and take us away from here?"

"Mrs. Walton will be kind to you, my son."

"I don't like to stay here," returned the boy.

"You will like it better in a little while. You must love your sister, Henry, and mind all she says to you, and try to be a good boy, and I will come for you as quickly as I can. And now good bye, my children."

"Good bye," was the low and sad response made by Alice and Henry. Mr. Altemas shook them by the hand, kissed them, and departed.

How slowly did the time pass! Four weeks seemed like a year. At last the period at which the father's return was looked for by the children, came round, but it brought them only a bitter disappointment. He did not come back as they believed he had promised them he would do; nor had any word been received from him since he went away. Another and another week expired, but the father did not return; neither was any letter received from him. During this time, Mrs. Walton let the children take care of themselves. She had little to say to them unless they came in her way, and then her manner and words were coarse and repulsive. Alice took the entire charge of her brother, dressing and washing him in the morning and putting him to bed at night. As time wore on, the manner of Mrs. Walton became more and more indifferent; or, as she happened to be in the humor, coarser and more repulsive. One day, about three months after Mr. Altemas went away, she came into the room where Alice sat mending her brother's clothes, and said to her abruptly—

"See here, girl! Do you know where your father has gone?"

"No ma'am," replied Alice in a low voice, and with a half-frightened manner.

"Did n't he tell you where he was going?"

"No ma'am."

"It 's very strange. Well, I can tell you what,—I do n't believe he means to come back at all. I believe he has just left you on my hands, and that the money he gave me when he went away is every dollar I shall see. But I will not be imposed upon in that way. Not I! So, my little miss, I will just tell you what you 've got to depend upon. If I do n't hear from your father in two weeks, I will not give you house room for another day. I believe you knew as well as he did, that it was all a trick to get you pushed off upon me. But it won't do. Polly Walton is too old for that. So, take my advice, and look out for another home at once, for you can 't stay here but a little while longer. I 've said it, and I mean it!"

By this time Mrs. Walton had worked herself into quite a passion, and, with glowing face and arms akimbo, she stood bating the affrighted children, without an emotion of pity touching the icy surface of her unfeeling heart.

After she had left them, Henry burst into tears and sobbed and wept bitterly, but Alice sat tearless and motionless as a statue. She was completely stunned. Feeling and thought were, for a time, almost suspended by this unexpected and cruel assault. In her own mind, there had arisen many misgivings about her father; and many fears had haunted her for weeks. But, for all this, the words of Mrs. Walton came with a shock that paralyzed her for a time.

Two weeks fled quickly away, and, during the time, the warning of Mrs. Walton was many times repeated, and with undiminished rudeness. But Alice did not go out to seek another place for herself and Henry. Where could she go? She knew no one. She was a mere child, and alone in a great city.

The two weeks passed. Mrs. Walton was in earnest in what she had said. But she could not turn the children into the street. Appearances would have been against her; and even she had some little regard for appearances. They might fall into the hands of the police, and their story might get into the newspapers, and she be held up to rebuke and scorn. She did not, therefore, thrust them out, literally, but she got rid of them.

"Alice," she said one day, at the expiration of the time she had named; "your father has not come back, and I don't suppose ever intends returning. As I told you, I can't keep you any longer for nothing. I can't afford it. You are old enough to go out and get your own living; and that is what you will have to do. Mrs. Gordon, in the next block, wants a little girl to tend her baby, and is willing to take you. She will give you your victuals and clothes. It's a good place."

"But, where will Henry go?" asked Alice, quickly and earnestly. "Will Mrs. Gordon let him live there with me?"

"No, of course not. She has children enough of her own. Henry can stay here for a little while, until I can find a place for him."

"Henry is not old enough to work," said Alice.

"I know that. But I can get a place for him where he will be treated kindly, and be well taken care of."

"Where?" asked the sister, anxiously.

"Never do you mind. I'll see that it's all done right. I'll find him a good place."

"But don't you think Mrs. Gordon will let him stay at her house if I do everything for him? He won't be any trouble."

"No. So don't think of any such a thing. She's got a house full of children of her own, and don't want the bother of other people's. Go and get your bonnet, and I will take you round to see Mrs. Gordon."

Alice went up stairs, and put on her bonnet. She came down, leading Henry, who had his hat in his hand. Mrs. Walton was waiting for her.

"You are not going to take him with you," said the latter, half angrily.

"Go and sit in the room there until I come back," Alice said, stooping down and speaking very gently and kindly to Henry. "I will be home soon."

The child's eyes filled with tears. He stood still, and let his sister go without him.

"Here is the little girl I was speaking to you about," said Mrs. Walton, on gaining the presence of Mrs. Gordon, who occupied the upper half of a house in the block next adjoining the one in which she lived.

"Ah, indeed!" returned Mrs. Gordon, smiling very pleasantly. "How old are you, my dear?"

"Most eleven, ma'am."

"Think you are strong enough to nurse a baby?"

"I do n't know, ma'am."

"Be sure she is! plenty strong enough! I nursed a baby before I was as old as she is," broke in Mrs. Walton, impatiently.

"You are willing to try, I suppose?" said Mrs. Gordon.

"Oh, yes, ma'am, I will try."

"Very well, take off your bonnet. Here is the baby."

Alice drew back.

"Take off your bonnet, child," said Mrs. Gordon.

"Must I come now?" asked the little girl, looking into the face of Mrs. Walton.

"Certainly, if Mrs. Gordon wants you! Why not now, as well as any other time?"

"But Henry," said Alice.

"What of him, I wonder?" remarked Mrs. Walton, tossing her head.

"He expects me to come back, you know."

"Well, suppose he does, and you do n't come, is that going to kill him? Take off your bonnet, child, and let us have no more parleying about the matter. Mrs. Gordon wants you now."

Alice laid off her bonnet, and sat down upon a low chair, to which Mrs. Gordon pointed. The baby was placed in her arms, and she was directed to nurse it carefully. The mother of the babe left the room, to have ten or fifteen minutes gossip with Mrs. Walton.

"Oh dear!" she said, as soon they were alone, "what a relief it is to get that child out of my arms!"

"It 's the hardest work in the world to be tied to a baby from morning 'til night."

"That it is. This seems to be a right nice sort of a little girl."

"Indeed, and she is, Mrs. Gordon. She 'll make the very best kind of a child's nurse. You do n't know how well she has attended to her brother. She has taken the whole care of him."

"What are you going to do with the little boy?"

"Send him over to Long Island."

"To the Long Island Farms?"

"Yes. It 's the very best thing that can be done with him. I do n't believe the father will ever come back. I 've found out

that he is a drunken, worthless fellow, who has beggared his family."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. I'm told that he was very well off once, but went through with everything."

"What a pity! But don't you think Alice will grieve after her brother?"

"At first, I suppose she will a little. But she'll soon get over it."

"When do you think about sending her brother over to the Farms?"

"I shall see about it at once."

"It seems like a pity to separate them," said Mrs. Gordon, a thought of her own children passing through her mind.

"So it does. But then it can't be helped. It's the very best place for him. He will be well taken care of, and receive an education. And when he is old enough, he will be bound out to a good trade. It is a most excellent institution."

"It certainly is. No doubt it will go a little hard with him, at first, to be separated from his sister; but he will get over it soon and be very happy."

"O yes. Children's grief is never very deep. He'll forget Alice in a week or two. It will do them both good to be separated. She is spoiling him. I think it will be best not to let them see each other again."

"Do you?"

"Yes. I don't believe, after being away from him for a short time, that Alice would consent to a separation at all. The child is a perfect baby, and I suppose, will do nothing but cry for a day or two. If Alice were to see him crying, she would get so worked up about him that nothing would do but she must have him with her."

"That would never do in the world."

"No, indeed. You could n't have him here."

"Me! oh no! I've got young ones enough of my own to see after. He can't come here."

"Of course not. But I'll manage all that. You see that Alice does not get round to my house for a day or two, and by that time I'll have Henry safe enough at the Farm school."

"Very well."

When Mrs. Gordon returned to the room where she had left Alice, she found her weeping.

"What is the matter? What are you crying about?" she asked, a little impatiently.

Alice looked up into the woman's face, and said with a look and tone that ought to have touched her heart—

"I promised Henry that I would be back in a little while. I did n't think I was to stay now. Oh, ma'am! he will cry so when he finds I do not come back with Mrs. Walton. Can 't I go and see him just for a few minutes, and tell him that I am not to stay with him any longer?"

"Mrs. Walton says she had rather you would n't. She will be kind to him, and he will soon forget you."

"Forget me!" said Alice, in surprise. "Oh, no, ma'am; he won't never forget me. I do n't think Mrs. Walton will be very kind to him. She never has been. Please, ma'am, won't you let him come and stay here? He won't be a bit of trouble to you. I 'll do everything for him."

"Come here! Good gracious child! no! I can 't have him here. I 've got enough children of my own."

"Then won't you let me go and see him, and talk to him just a little while. It will make him feel better."

"No, child, I can 't do it. I want you to nurse the baby. And, besides, as I told you Mrs. Walton thinks it will be better for you not to see him just now."

Alice bent down over the babe she held in her arms, while the tears that had been restrained for a few moments, flowed afresh.

"Come! come!" said Mrs. Gordon, fretfully. "I do n't want any blubbering and crying here. I have enough of that among my own children."

Alice staunched her tears with an effort. That is, their outward flow. But the inward, heart-gushing tears, of which these visible drops were only the outward sign, gushed more freely. These the eye of Mrs. Gordon could not perceive, and she did not, therefore, seek to check them.

Slowly and sadly passed that long, long day to Alice, her mind partially sustained by the feeble hope that when night came, Mrs. Gordon would permit her to run round and see Henry just for a few moments. Not for a minute at a time during that, to her, long period, was the image of her brother from before her

mind. She saw him weeping bitterly, or sitting alone in silent grief at her absence; or, shrinking away in alarm from the harsh words of Mrs. Walton.

"Night at last came. The tea table was cleared away. All the children had gone to bed, and the baby lay asleep in its cradle. Mrs. Gordon sat down by her work-table to sew, and Mr. Gordon, who had come home from the business of the day, took a book and began reading. Alice was sitting near the cradle, but the babe slept so soundly that no motion of the rocking bed was necessary to prolong its slumber. The little girl arose, and coming near to Mrs. Gordon, looked into her face with swimming eyes, and said—

"Please, ma'am, do let me just run round for a minute and see Henry. The baby is asleep."

"Didn't I tell you this morning that you couldn't go?" replied the woman sternly. "What is the use of your asking me again? Please to understand that I always mean what I say."

Alice shrunk from the side of Mrs. Gordon, with a frightened look. Mr. Gordon glanced up from his volume, and let his eyes rest upon the little girl for a few moments, and then upon his wife. But, as the latter made no remark to him, he resumed his reading, satisfied with letting matters that did not concern him alone. He had received some lessons on that subject during his life-time, which impressed themselves pretty deeply on his memory.

Waking or sleeping, that night there was but one image present to the mind of Alice—the image of her brother. In the morning, she arose early, unrefreshed. It seemed to her that she could not live another day without seeing Henry. She had been down stairs about half an hour, and was dusting the sitting room, after it had been swept up by the domestic, when Mr. Gordon came in with the morning paper in his hand, and sat down to read it. There was something kind in the face of Mr. Gordon. Something that gave the heart of Alice confidence, when she looked into it. She had felt this from the first. As he sat reading his paper, he noticed that the little girl frequently came near him and appeared to linger, as if she was about speaking every time she did so. At last she said something in a low voice, that he couldn't make out distinctly. He looked up and said, kindly,

"What is it?"

"Please, sir, won't you ask Mrs. Gordon to let me go and see my little brother." The child's voice trembled, and her eyes were filled with tears.

"Certainly I will," replied the kind-hearted man. He had heard something about the separation that had taken place; but nothing very distinctly. His wife did not care to be very particular in the information she gave him on that subject.

Alice went away from his side with a brighter countenance and a lighter heart. As soon as Mrs. Gordon came down stairs, and sent Alice into the chamber to take the baby, her husband said—

"Anna, why don't you let that little girl go and see her brother?"

"Because Mrs. Walton don't want me to do so. She says the child is a perfect baby, and that if Alice goes there she will not be able to do any thing with him."

"But it is downright cruel, Anna. Alice is evidently pining to see her brother."

"It may go a little hard with her at first; but it's not going to kill her. It's a great deal better, as the separation has to take place, to let it be permanent. It will only make things worse if she is allowed to go and see him. Mrs. Walton was particular about it, and I promised to do as she desired, when I took the girl."

"Well, I suppose you know best; but I think it's a cruel thing. Imagine our Emma and George placed in the same circumstances."

"But they are not."

"There is no knowing how soon they may be. Neither your life nor mine is guaranteed for an hour."

"That's just the way with you, Mr. Gordon. You're always interfering with my affairs. I never trouble myself with your business. I never question what you do. I don't think I'm a very cruel woman. If the girl can't stay as I want her to, she may just go back again. If I'm to have all this trouble with her, I won't have her at all."

And Mrs. Gordon ran on in this strain for about five minutes. But long before she was done, her husband had sought refuge in the columns of his newspaper, and either did not, or pretended

not to hear a word that was uttered. He pitied the child, but gave up all idea of becoming her champion.

The hope that Mr. Gordon's words had inspired in the mind of Alice, lived there for hours. But as nothing was said about her going to see Henry, even up to dinner time, that hope began to waver. When Mr. Gordon came home in the middle of the day, the first one he met was Alice. Her earnest, almost imploring look, smote upon his heart. He wished to say something to her; but, what could he say? Nothing that he wished to say—nothing but what would make her more unhappy than she really was. He, therefore, said not a word; but, he felt guilty before the child—guilty of inspiring a hope that he did not, or, he thought, could not gratify.

Another day drew to a close, and yet Alice had not seen her brother, nor, from all appearances, was there any prospect of her being likely to see him soon, unless she acted in direct violation of the wishes of Mrs. Gordon. When fully satisfied that all appeals were in vain, the child resolved to go to her brother, and brave all consequences. So, just about nightfall, when the babe was asleep, and Mrs. Gordon was out of the way, she stole quietly from the house, and ran as fast as her feet would carry her to the dwelling of Mrs. Walton. Entering through the basement, she glided up stairs, and sought the room where she and Henry had usually spent the day alone. But her brother was not there. As she came out into the passage, disappointed, she met Hannah, the chambermaid.

"Where is Henry?" she asked in a hurried voice.

"Bless me, Alice! Is this you?" exclaimed the chambermaid. "Why in the world haven't you been to see your brother? I thought he would have cried himself to death."

"They wouldn't let me come. But, where is he? Where is he?" asked Alice in a choking voice.

"He isn't here. He's gone. Didn't you know that?"

"Gone! Oh, where? where?" The poor child staggered back, and sunk upon the stairs.

"They took him away this morning."

"Where? Oh, tell me where!"

"I don't know. He cried dreadfully, and asked for you. They took him away in a carriage. But they spoke kindly to him. I don't think they will treat him bad. Indeed I don't,

Alice! I would n't cry so about it. He 'll get over it soon. I 'm sure they 'll be good to him. The man spoke very kindly. He looked like a good man."

Just then, Mrs. Walton, hearing voices in the passage, came down stairs.

"Why Alice, child! What are you doing here? Did Mrs. Gordon say you might come?"

"Oh, ma'am!" exclaimed Alice, springing up, and catching eagerly hold of the woman's dress, "where is Henry? Tell me where he is. I must see him! I must go to him!"

"Do n't be silly, child," said Mrs. Walton, coldly. "Henry is doing very well. He 's in a good place."

"But, where? Oh, ma'am, tell me where?"

"I can 't do that. You are not to know where he is at present."

The hands that clasped tightly the garments of the unfeeling woman, relaxed their hold, and the stricken child sunk upon the floor. This was more than she could bear.

"It 's cruel, so it is!" ejaculated the chambermaid, as she stooped down quickly and lifted Alice in her arms. Every muscle was relaxed; her eyes were closed; her face was ashy pale. "You 've killed the child, I believe!" she added with indignant emotion.

"Hush! will you?" said Mrs. Walton, in a passionate voice.

The girl carried the insensible body up stairs, and laid it on a bed.

"There!" she said, turning to Mrs. Walton, who had followed her — "see what you 've done! A brute could n't have acted worse. If these children were any thing to me, this would be a sorry day for you, my lady. Oh! you need n't look black at me in that way. I 'm not afraid to speak out my mind to any body."

"Go out of my house, this instant, you impudent huzzy, you!" Mrs. Walton stamped her foot violently, while her face grew black with passion.

"You 'd better look after the child, that she does n't die," returned the chambermaid, coolly, "and not waste your words on me. If she does die, I 'll stand evidence that you killed her. Yes, I 'll swear to that any day—so I will!"

This caused a feeling of alarm to arise in the heart of Mrs. Walton, who repressed her anger, and turning to the insensible

child, sought by bathing her face in cold water and vinegar, and by the free use of hartshorn, to restore the vital energy that had retired into the deep and hidden interior of her body. It was half an hour before these efforts were attended with success. Then Alice roused up partly, and called in a most piteous tone for Henry. Even the hard heart of Mrs. Walton was touched; while the chambermaid burst into tears.

"Go 'round and tell Mrs. Gordon that Alice is here, and say what is the matter with her," said Mrs. Walton. "She 'll wonder where she is."

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were sitting at the tea-table, with their three eldest children, when Mrs. Walton's messenger came in.

"Mrs. Walton sent me round," said Hannah, "to tell you that Alice is there."

"And what is she doing there? I positively forbade her going."

"She came round to see her brother. But he was gone, and the poor child fainted when she heard it. It was a downright cruel thing, it was!"

"Fainted!" said Mr. Gordon, in surprise.

"Yes, sir. And she 's just coming to. Oh! if you could hear how she is calling for little Henry, and she not more than half herself, it would make your heart ache! But I must run back. I only came to let you know where she was." And the impulsive, warm-hearted Hannah, turned away and left Mr. and Mrs. Gordon in no very comfortable frame of mind.

"Yes, it was a downright cruel thing!" exclaimed Mr. Gordon, as soon as Hannah had retired. "And I 'm very sorry that we have had anything to do in the matter."

Mrs. Gordon felt a little strange, but she did not say much. This left room for her husband to express himself pretty freely, which he did not fail to do."

After tea, Mrs. Gordon went into Mrs. Walton's. She found Alice restored to reason, but grieving bitterly for her brother. Nothing that was said to her gave her any comfort. To every thing she answered by desiring to be taken to Henry. But this she was told positively could not be; as he had been taken out of the city. To her earnest entreaties to be told where he was, no answer was given. Heart-sick and almost hopeless, the unhappy child went back with Mrs. Gordon, who more than half repented

having had any thing to do with her. Days and weeks passed by, but no word came to her of Henry. From the time she parted with him, all was, in regard to him, a blank. She had ceased to grieve openly, but there was a fountain of tears ever pouring out its waters in her heart. Her daily thoughts and nightly dreams were for her brother. But all availed not. From Hannah she hoped to learn something definite; and with this end, she stole around to Mrs. Walton's to see her, one evening about a week after she had learned the distressing news of Henry's removal she knew not where. But Hannah's plain-speaking had lost her her place. A stranger to Alice was there in her stead. Months went by, and still she could learn nothing of Henry, although many times during that period she had tearfully implored Mrs. Gordon to tell her where he was; but that lady thought it best, upon the whole, to keep her own counsel in the matter. She argued with herself that it could really do Alice no good to know where Henry was, and might be the means of completely spoiling her, and making her brother unhappy in his new and excellent home. She was sure, if Alice knew where he was, that she would seek him out in spite of all interdictions, and such a meeting she believed would be productive of more harm than good. Thus she satisfied herself; but her husband never felt easy about the matter. He, however, quieted his conscience by assuming that it was his wife's business, not his.

Time did little to mitigate the grief of heart occasioned by this rude separation. Alice eat but little, and moved about with a quiet, subdued manner, that was ever felt by Mr. Gordon when he came in contact with her, as a reproof. Her form grew thinner, her countenance sadder, and her cheeks paler, every day. Her voice was never heard, except in reply to some question, and then it was low, and had so mournful an expression, that Mr. Gordon could not bear to hear it.

"Anna," he said to his wife, one day, "I wish you would either let Alice go and see her brother, or send her away. I cannot bear to look at her. She is dying by inches. Her sad face reproves me every day."

"Nonsense!" returned Mrs. Gordon quite fiercely. "I don't see but she is doing well enough. I 'll be bound she has n't thought of her brother for a week. It 's all your imagination."

"Not by any means, Anna. I can see that her face gets paler

and sadder all the time. But, at best, I can 't make out what harm is to come of her being allowed to see her little brother."

"I can, then. I can see that she won't be worth a copper to me, afterwards."

"I 'll guarantee that she will be just as valuable again. But that out of the question; humanity calls upon us to put her heart at rest in regard to her brother."

"I do n't think it does, if the act is going to make them both more unhappy than they are now; a thing that certainly will occur. I believe I am quite as tender-hearted as you are, and can feel just as much for the child as you do; but I am settled in my belief, that the very best thing for both these children is to let them remain in ignorance of each other. The policy of the school is to sever all former relations, in order that there may be no interference. When a child is old enough to be bound out to a trade, the place to which he is sent is known only to the managers of the institution, and is never divulged."

"Then it is settled between you and Mrs. Walton, that Alice is never to see her brother again?"

"I wish, Mr. Gordon, that you would not meddle yourself in things that do n't concern you, as this does n't."

"I rather think, Anna, that it does concern me a little," quietly returned Mr. Gordon. "I feel myself to be just as much responsible in this matter as you are, and just as guilty of wrong to these children."

"You are a strange man to talk, Mr. Gordon; a very strange man!"

"And you are a strange woman to act, Anna; a very strange woman!"

This so inflamed the ire of Mrs. Gordon, that she gave her husband such a setting down as made him glad to be quiet. And so all his good intentions in regard to Alice were, for the time being, laid into quiescence.

Change we, now, the scene of our story to a southern city, and advance the time two years from the period of its opening. Three or four men were sitting in a coffee-house, frequented mostly by flat-boatmen and others of the same grade, drinking, smoking, and swearing, when a wretched-looking creature, with bloated face, and clothes torn and dirty, who in every way presented a most debased and miserable appearance, entered, and going up to the bar, called for whiskey and water.

"You owe me three or four bits, now, for liquor," said the bar-keeper. "Where's your money?"

The man fumbled in his pocket some moments, muttering to himself as he did so—

"Confound it all! I had a picayune here, that a man just gave me for holding his horse."

At this there was a laugh through the bar-room, and one of the company said, aloud—

"Hurrah for Altemas! He's had another horse to hold!"

"It won't do, my good fellow," remarked the bar-keeper. "You don't come it over me in that way, no how. You've done it once or twice too often. But you can't do it again, old chap! I've heard that horse story too often."

The man became excited at this, and said angrily—

"Shut up, will you!"

"Look here, old fellow; I don't want any of your jaw," retorted the bar-keeper, getting angry in turn. "You're a cheating old rascal; and you'd better take yourself off in double quick time, or you may happen to get rowed up Salt River."

"Shut up, I tell you!" said Altemas, sternly.

"You're not put there to insult customers."

"If you're not out of this room in two minutes by the watch, I'll throw you out neck and heels."

"It'll take a better man than you to do that, my fine young chicken!"

"You've got but two minutes, and I advise you to make good use of your drumsticks in that time, or by———"

"Bah!" broke in the man. "You'll have to shave with something else besides the back of a razor before you can do that!" and he turned away and deliberately seated himself in a chair.

The bar-tender stood coolly looking at the clock, until the minute-hand had moved over the space comprised between three dots. Then coming round into the area in front of the bar, he advanced towards the object of his ire, who remained quietly in his chair.

"Go out of this room, sir!" he said, in a loud, authoritative voice; "or I'll throw you out, neck and heels."

"Don't put yourself in a passion, Jimmy! It isn't pleasant this warm weather."

"Are you going! Once! Twice! Three times!"

Saying this, the angry bar-tender seized upon Altemas by the

collar, and with one vigorous pull, drew him half the length of the room. Before the latter could recover himself sufficiently to offer the resistance he had meditated, he was reeling into the street. He fell across the curbstone, with a shock that completely stunned him.

"That was a cowardly trick, Jimmy!" remarked one of the inmates of the room, showing his teeth as he spoke.

"Do you take it up?" enquired the bar-keeper, whose mind was in a fever of excitement.

"Yes I do; and I think you'll find me rather more of a match than a poor, miserable, broken-down creature like the one you made yourself so valiant upon just now."

As the man said this, he drew from beneath his coat a long heavy knife, with which one might easily kill an ox, while a murderous scowl darkened over his face. The bar-keeper instantly produced a similar instrument, that glittered as he held it forth. A serious conflict would have ensued immediately, had it not been for the entrance of a couple of police officers, who demanded to know why the man on the pavement had been thrown from the house, and who had done it?

"There, Jimmy! There's some other business for you to settle first," said one of the persons who had gathered around him and his antagonist to see the sport.

"I did it," replied the bar-keeper. "I ordered him out, and he would n't go."

"But that did n't give you the right to throw him out in the way you did," returned one of the officers. "The man, I should think, is seriously injured. It may cost him his life. You will come with me, sir, and give bail for your appearance to answer in this matter."

A summons like this was not to be disputed, and Jimmy went off, with his courage, that had so highly vaunted itself, quite down to zero.

In the meantime, Mr. Altemas lay stunned upon the pavement. On being lifted up, a severe contusion was found upon his head. Opposite to where this scene had occurred, was the shop of a tailor. The owner of it saw, from his window, the brutal manner in which the poor wretch had been thrust from the coffee-house, and was one of the first who came to his assistance. He had him carried into his house and taken into a back room, where every

possible attention was shown to him. It was not long before the vital current began to flow again through the body of the injured man, and with it came a free effusion of blood from the wound upon his head. A doctor was called in and the wound dressed.

"My good friend," said the tailor, mildly, after Mr. Altemas was himself again, and able to sit up firmly, although his head reeled a little when he attempted to stand—"I should think, that, by this time, you had found the words of Holy Writ true, and proved that the way of the transgressor is hard."

No reply was made to this remark.

"Have you any children?" asked the tailor, changing his mode of address.

"I have," was replied.

"In this town?" further enquired the tailor.

The man shook his head and compressed his lips in a way that indicated his wish not to be questioned on that subject; but the tailor had an end in view, and, therefore, continued his enquiries.

"How many children have you?"

"Two," was answered.

"Girls or boys?"

"One girl and one boy."

The tailor noticed that the voice of the poor, fallen, and degraded creature, slightly quivered in making this last reply.

"They are grown up, I suppose?" he continued.

"No. The girl is about thirteen, or thereabouts, and the boy not over nine years of age."

"Indeed! So young! Are they with their mother?"

Altemas shook his head.

The man who was interrogating him, saw that his questions were throwing the mind of the unhappy drunkard back upon a subject that could not be thought of without pain, and, it was evident, more or less disturbance of mind. All this he hoped would prove salutary. He was one of those who never despaired of a drunkard. He had been one himself, and was now reformed. He had seen hundreds reformed as debased and besotted as the individual before him. He had assisted in the reform of very many, and he hoped to reform the poor wretch who had fallen into his hands.

"Is their mother living?" he next asked.

A shake of the head was the reply to this question also.

"Where are your children, my friend?"

"God knows! for I do n't," he said with visible emotion.

"You left them with friends, I suppose?"

"For Heaven's sake! ask me no more questions," said Altemas, turning partly away.

"Pardon me!" mildly answered the tailor. "I naturally felt interested in you; for, there was a time when I was as much cursed by a craving appetite for liquor as you are now."

"You?" said Altemas, speaking with much apparent surprise.

"Yes, my friend. Three years ago I was as you are now. My children were scattered; my wife was almost broken-hearted, and I was a miserable, debased, unhappy wretch. But I was saved, and so may you be."

"Me? No—that is impossible! I am lost! If I could not reform years ago, when I tried hard and prayed earnestly for strength, how can I be reformed now? No—no. The sooner I am dead the better! It is no use for me to try."

"So I said, over and over again; and yet you see me a reformed, a prosperous, and a happy man to-day, just what you may be. Think of your children, and for their sakes, my friend, make one more effort; and if you make it in the way I made it, you must, you will succeed!"

"How did you make it?"

"I joined the Washingtonians, under the total abstinence pledge. And since that, the Sons of Temperance."

"Became a tetotaler!" said Altemas, with a slight, involuntary expression of contempt.

"Yes, thank God!" warmly replied the tailor. "And that is what you must become. That will save you; but nothing else will. Unless you take this pledge, you will die a drunkard's death, and fill a drunkard's grave. But you look pale, and are trembling from head to foot. We will talk no more about this now. That fall has hurt you a good deal. Come up stairs and lie down for a while, until you recover yourself. My wife will take you up a bowl of strong coffee to refresh you."

"You are very kind," said Altemas.

It was a long time since he had heard a kind or sympathizing word. Accepting the tailor's invitation, he went up stairs and lay down upon an old sofa. A bowl of coffee was brought to him which he drank eagerly. He then fell off to sleep and slept

for two or three hours. When he awoke, he found the tailor in the room with him.

"You feel better, I hope?" said this disinterested friend, as Altemas rose up from his recumbent position.

"A little better, I thank you; but I am terribly dry. Have you any water?"

A pitcher of cool water was brought. Half of its contents were emptied at a draught.

"Will you have a cup of coffee and something to eat?" was now asked.

"If you please. But I am sorry to give so much trouble."

"All this is no trouble to us, but a pleasure. If we can do you good, that will doubly reward us."

Coffee and food were brought. Altemas eat, and wondered. He could not understand why such interest should be taken in a miserable outcast like himself. The act, and the manner of the act, touched him a good deal. After he had eaten and felt refreshed, the tailor drew from him, little by little, a history of his life. This brought back the drunkard's better feelings. He thought of his children, and how he had forsaken them, and left them among strangers—young, helpless, and friendless. Bitterly did his heart smite him for this cruel act of desertion. For their sakes, the desire for reform took possession of him.

"Oh! If there was any hope! But there is none. I am too far gone," he said mournfully.

"No man was ever too far gone for that, until dead. While there is life there is hope. As sure as there is a God in heaven who pities our weakness, and helps us when we call upon him and strive, at the same time, to overcome our evils, you may reform. Are you willing to try?"

"Oh, yes."

"Will you try in the way I direct?"

"Yes. Only point me out the way, and I will seek to walk in it."

"You have never signed a pledge?"

"No."

"Nor tried total abstinence?"

"No."

"Be of good cheer, my unhappy friend! All will yet be well. In the pledge signed by your own hand, in association with those

who have themselves been reformed, you will find a power all-sufficient to sustain you. To-night there is a meeting of our association of reformed men. Will you go with me, sign the pledge, and be a free and happy man?"

Altemas glanced down at his ragged and dirty garments.

"I cannot go any where among decent men in these."

"If you wish to sign the pledge, if you are really in earnest in this matter, as I trust you are, I will provide you with better clothes. I have some old garments that I have laid aside that are much better than the ones you have, and you shall be welcome to them."

This additional act of kindness touched Altemas deeply. He was really more sober than he had been for months, and could think and feel clearer and more acutely.

"Heaven knows I am in earnest," he said. "Oh, if I could but be a man again, and undo some of the wrong that I have done!"

"The way is all plain before you, my friend. Enter and walk in it steadily to the end," replied the tailor.

Altemas was supplied with water to cleanse himself; with a clean shirt; a very good pair of pantaloons; an old vest, and a coat partly worn. After washing and dressing himself, he came down stairs, looking so different from what he had done a short time before, that the tailor could not help an exclamation of surprise. Mr. Altemas enquired where the meeting was to be held, saying, at the same time, that he would certainly attend and sign the pledge.

"You must stay and take supper with me," replied the tailor to this, "and then I will go with you to the meeting. Where are you staying?"

"Alas, my good friend, I have really no home. I am an outcast. I have fallen very low."

"Then you must return and stay at my house to-night. To-morrow we will try to get you something to do, and you can then enter regularly at a good temperance boarding-house, to the keeper of which I will introduce you."

This was so unexpected to Altemas, that it quite overcame him.

When night came, he went gladly to the temperance meeting. Half a dozen experiences were related, so nearly resembling his

own, that he listened in amazement and took hope. When the invitations to sign the pledge were given, he was among the first to subscribe his name to that instrument. At the close of the meeting he went back with the tailor, and remained at his house for two days, when a situation as clerk in a wholesale grocery store, kept by a Son of Temperance, was obtained for him. The salary was eight dollars a week.

Henry Altemas, now clothed and in his right mind, bethought himself at once of his children. He wrote to Mrs. Walton about them, and waited with anxiety and impatience for an answer. Six weeks, more than time to hear from New York, elapsed, but no reply came to his letter. He wrote again, promising to send money the moment he heard from her; but the same silence was the result. The more he thought about his children, and the longer he was in suspense about them, the more anxious did he become. He next wrote to an old friend, and from him received for answer, that he had enquired at the number in Division-street which he had named, and learned that Mrs. Walton had been dead for more than a year, and that no one in the house knew any thing about his children.

It was three months from the time he received this intelligence, before the unhappy father, who had remained faithful to his pledge, could save from his small salary enough money to take him to New York, and bring him back with his children. Then, with seventy-five dollars in his pocket, he took passage in a boat for Wheeling, as a deck passenger, in order to go in the cheapest possible way, so that he might not exhaust the small sum he had with him before his return.

On arriving in New York, Mr. Altemas sought but in vain, to learn something of his children. Mrs. Walton was dead, and no one that he could find knew any thing about her. After remaining in New York for a week, during which time his fruitless search was continued, he advertised for information in regard to his children. On the second day after this advertisement was published, a young woman, whose appearance was that of a domestic, called upon Mr. Altemas, and informed him that she had lived with Mrs. Walton as a chamber-maid at the time his two children were there; and that Alice had been put out as a child's nurse to a Mrs. Gordon near by where Mrs. Walton lived, while Henry was sent to the Farm School. She described quite vividly

the affliction of Alice when she discovered that her brother had been sent away.

"Oh, sir! It was a cruel sight," she said. "A cruel sight; and it made my heart ache. I spoke out my mind plainly enough to Mrs. Walton; I could n't help it; and it lost me my place; but I did n't care for that."

After taking the number of the house at which Hannah, whom the reader has recognized, lived, Mr. Altemas hurried off to find Mrs. Gordon. But a family by another name lived in the house. On referring to the Directory, he found many "Gordons" named. A whole day was spent in running from one of these to the other. At last, to his oft-repeated enquiry—after seeing the lady of the house at which he called, and for whom he always asked—

"Does a little girl named Alice live with you?" he received for answer—

"A child by that name did live with me nearly two years ago; but she went off one day, and I have never heard of her since."

"Had she a little brother in the Farm School?" enquired Mr. Altemas.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know any thing of him?"

"No, sir, nothing at all."

"And you have heard nothing of Alice since she left."

"No sir."

"Have you no idea where she has gone?"

"None in the least, sir."

Mr. Altemas turned away dreadfully disappointed. Without a moment's further delay, he started for the Long Island Farms. On arriving there, he asked if they had a boy in the institution named Henry Altemas; but was answered in the negative.

"You must have, surely!" he said, showing a good deal of agitation.

"No, sir, I believe not," was replied.

"But the boy I speak of certainly did come here."

"When?"

"About two years ago."

"In what month?"

Mr. Altemas thought for a moment, and then named the month, as near as he could.

The records of the institution were examined.

"Yes, sir, a lad by that name was sent here at the time you mention. But I find it recorded, that he escaped from the school and was never brought back."

"Strange!" said the father. "Is that all the intelligence you can give me about him?"

"Every word, sir."

"Was no search made for him?"

"Every possible effort, I presume, was made to recover him. Such is always the case. But it seems that it was of no avail."

Heart-sick and distressed was the unhappy father, as he turned away, and went back to the city, almost hopeless of finding his children. What they had suffered since he left them to the tender mercies of strangers, he knew not. But that they had suffered severely, and might, if alive, be still suffering, he felt, must, too surely, be the case. What to do, or which way to turn himself, he knew not. Advertisements were renewed, and papers out of the city requested to copy them as an act of humanity. Weeks passed, but no intelligence of the lost ones came.

The reader will remember the interview between Mr. Gordon and his wife about Alice, and how, for the time-being, the good intentions of the former were overruled by the imperious spirit of the latter. Several weeks elapsed, during which time there were few days in which Mr. Gordon did not think of the suffering child that was an inmate of his house, with feelings of pain. One morning he sat in the breakfast room, reading the newspaper, when Alice came in with the baby which she had just received from its mother, and sat down near him with the infant in her arms. Mr. Gordon glanced over the edge of his paper, and let his eyes rest upon her face. Its look of pain and sadness touched his feelings as it had often done before. From his very heart he pitied her. While looking at her, he noticed that her breast heaved with a slight convulsive emotion, and then a faint sigh stole upon his ear.

"I can stand this no longer," he said to himself, as he drew the newspaper before his eyes, and mused for some moments.

"Alice," he at length said, letting the newspaper fall in his lap.

The child looked up at him quickly.

"Alice, has no one yet told you where your brother is?"

"No sir," she replied, in a low voice, but with an eager expression of countenance.

"Then I will tell you; but I do not wish you to say to any one that I did so. Your brother is at the Farm School."

"Where?"

"At the Farm School on Long Island."

"What is that?"

In a few words Mr. Gordon explained to Alice the nature of the institution, which was for the reception and education of destitute young children. He also told her that it was located about five miles above Williamsburg, on the East River.

"Can't I go and see Henry?" enquired Alice, trembling with the eager desire with which she was instantly seized.

"I believe Mrs. Gordon thinks your brother will be much happier if he does not see you. If you should go where he is, he would want to come away with you, and you know that could not be. He is well treated, and I am sure must be quite contented by this time."

"Oh no, sir! He can't be contented without seeing me. Won't you take me to see him? Oh! if he should get sick and die!"

The voice of Alice faltered, and her eyes filled with tears. Mr. Gordon felt deeply for the poor child.

"You must be patient for a little while longer, Alice!" he said, kindly. "I have told you where he is, and now your heart can be at rest on that subject. It will not be long, I hope, before Mrs. Gordon will think it right to let you go and see your brother. But, until that time, you must try to be as patient as you can."

The entrance of Mrs. Gordon closed this interview with a grateful look from the tearful eyes of Alice. All day long the little girl mused upon what Mr. Gordon had told her: and during most of the night that followed she lay awake thinking about her brother. So intense became her desire to see him, that on the next day, while the family were at dinner, she quietly left the house, and ran as fast as her feet would carry her to the Williamsburg ferry. When her father went away he gave her a few coins, which she put in a little purse, her mother's present; this money she had never spent. It was now of use to her, for she could pay her fare across the river. On arriving at Wil-

liamsburg, Alice asked a man on the dock to tell her the way to the Long Island Farms. He said they were a long distance up the river—some four or five miles. The man spoke short and roughly, and the child shrunk away from him. She felt afraid to ask any one else. Making her way out of Williamsburg as quickly as she possibly could, Alice took the river shore, and commenced her long and weary journey, with the hot sun blazing down upon her. She had not gone far before she felt frightened at being thus alone, away from houses and people. But the thought of her brother restored her courage, and she pressed on with eager footsteps. It was two hours before she reached the Farms. When she applied for admission, she was told that she could not come in, unless she had an order from the office of the Alms-House Commissioner in New York. This, to the poor child, whose heart was yearning to see her brother, was more than she could bear. She covered her face with her hands, and leaning against the gate, sobbed and wept bitterly! The person to whom she had applied, was touched at this exhibition of her sorrow.

"What do you want to come in for, my little girl?" he asked in a kind voice.

"I want to see my brother Henry," she replied, looking up with tearful eyes.

"What is his name besides Henry?"

"Henry Altemas."

"Has he been long here?"

"Oh no, sir! They carried him off when I was away, and nobody would tell me where he was. I did n't know until yesterday; and I 've walked all the way out to see him. If I go back, they won't let me come again, I know. Oh, sir! do let me see my little brother Henry! It won't make him unhappy, I know it won't."

The man was touched still further by the deep tenderness expressed in the child's face, and the earnest, pleading pathos of her voice. He told her to wait a little while and he would go and see the Superintendent. On consulting with this individual, he said the little girl could n't come in without a permit. He went, however, to see her at the gate. Her manner quickly overcame his objections, and he yielded to his feelings and broke the rule by admitting her. Taking her by the hand, he led her

into a room where were about twenty small children. They all looked up with countenances of interest, but one of them gave a cry of joy, and starting forward, was almost instantly in the arms of Alice, clinging around her neck, and almost devouring her with kisses, while tears gushed from his eyes. Alice was so overcome, that she tottered back, and sunk upon a bench, still holding on to her brother, and laying her face down and pressing it upon his wet cheeks. The Superintendent turned away to conceal his emotion. His kind feelings prompted him to remove the two children into a room by themselves, where they were left for a while alone.

About an hour after Alice came, he went into the room where he had left her, and found Henry lying asleep in her arms. The child aroused up on his entrance, and Alice drew her arms more closely around him.

"Well, Alice," he said—"I believe you told me that was your name—is n't it time for you to go back to the city?"

Henry began to cry at this; and Alice lifted her large blue eyes to the face of the Superintendent, with a look of pleading distress.

"You can 't stay here, you know, Alice," he said. "We let you in, even against the rule, to see your brother, and you must go back now, or we can never let you come in again."

"Oh, do n't go 'way Alice! Do n't go 'way!" cried Henry, shrinking closer to his sister. "Stay here with me." And the child trembled with the fear of being again separated from her.

The Superintendent found himself in a dilemma. It grieved him to do violence to the feelings of the children, but his duty was plain in the case. It was out of the question for Alice to remain there. Sitting down beside them, he asked the oldest of the two many questions, and learned from her the cruel manner in which her brother had been separated from her, and her ignorance of where he was until the day previous. After half an hour's reflection, he told her she might stay until the morning, if she would promise then to leave her brother and return to the city without opposition. She promised, but the Superintendent saw that it was not from the heart, and that he should find it hard, even in the morning, to separate the children.

That night Alice slept again in the same room with Henry, or, rather lay awake through most of the night thinking about their

separation in the morning. The thought of it was dreadful to her. She fell asleep late, and awoke some hours afterwards, aroused from her slumber by a dream that her brother had been taken away from her! She went quickly to his bed, and passed her hand over it. He was there. Back to her own couch she stole, and lay now wide awake, thinking about the morning. Suddenly the thought of trying to get Henry away came into her mind, and caused her heart to flutter. She arose and went to the window. The moon was shining. She could see the way she came, and the wish that she were beyond the fence of the institution, with her little brother, even in the night, took possession of her. After looking forth, and thinking about this for many minutes, she went up to Henry's bed, and shook him several times. This awakened him. After he clearly understood where he was, and that his sister was with him, Alice asked him if he would not get up and go away with her. He unhesitatingly replied that he would.

"Can you find your way down stairs?"

"Yes," he replied.

"After you are in the yard, can you get out?"

Henry said that he could. There was no more doubt nor hesitation on the part of Alice. She dressed herself silently and quickly, and then assisted Henry on with his clothes. When they were ready, they went down in their bare feet, and opened the door, and succeeded in making their escape from the premises without alarming any one. Swiftly as their flying feet would carry them, did the little fugitives hurry to the river side, and take their way towards New York along its winding shore. The hope of escape extinguished all their natural timidity. They felt not that it was night, gloomy night; they only felt eager to get far away from all successful pursuit. It was day-light when they reached Williamsburg. Milk wagons and market wagons were crowding upon the ferry-boat, that was just about leaving the wharf. The children passed on board, not, however, without a remark from the ferryman that it was rather early for such little folks as them to be abroad. Alice was frightened; but the man made no attempt to detain them.

As soon as they landed in New York, Alice struck directly across the city with her brother, for one of the ferries. The unusual circumstances in which she was placed, made her

thoughtful and sagacious beyond her years. It occurred to her that search would be less likely to be made for them in the direction she was taking than it would be in any other, and this was the reason why she started direct for New Jersey. In crossing the city, she reached, first, the Jersey city ferry. Without a moment's hesitation, she stepped on board of the boat with Henry. Her heart did not beat easy until after the boat had moved out from the slip, and was rapidly leaving the city. Then she sat down, with Henry by her side, and, for the first time, the question as to where they were to go, and what they were to do? arose in her mind. She had about a dollar and a half in her purse. This she knew would buy them food for the day, and might procure them lodgings for the night; but she did not know how that would be. She dreaded, lest when night came, and they asked for lodgings, they would be taken and sent back to New York. These thoughts troubled Alice, as the boat bore them rapidly away from the city.

It was ten o'clock when they reached Newark. Alice bought a few cakes for Henry at a shop, and then they made their way into the country by the first avenue that opened before them. Alice eat nothing. She had no desire for food. They walked at a quick pace, along an unsheltered road, with the sun shining hot upon their heads. By noon, Henry was tired and thirsty, and complained that his feet hurt him. Alice tried to urge him on, but the little fellow was worn out with fatigue, and oppressed with the heat. A short distance from the road was a small cluster of trees; towards these they directed their steps. The grass was high and soft beneath them, and a cool stream of water murmured near at hand. Alice bathed her own and her brother's feet in this stream, and then sat down in the pleasant shade, with Henry's head in her lap. In ten minutes both were sound asleep.

How long they slept Alice did not know, but when she awoke, the sun had sunk much lower in the sky, and the shadows that lay close around the trees had stretched far away from them. Henry still slumbered heavily, and it took her some time to arouse him. After she had bathed her own and her brother's face in the cool stream that sparkled close by, they both felt greatly refreshed and again proceeded on their way. But whither they were going they knew not. They were abroad in

the wide world without a home, and in fleeing from certain evils, willing to encounter whatever might be before them as easier to be endured than separation.

Many weary miles were trodden by their young feet, and many farm houses and dwellings by the road-side passed, before the sun touched the red horizon in the west. They had not tasted food since they left Newark, and feared to ask for it at any of the houses lest questions should be put to them that it would be difficult for them to answer.

A pleasant house stood near the road-side; and children were playing around the door. Through the windows, as they passed wearily along, Alice saw the mother busily preparing the evening meal, while the father sat looking out upon his happy little ones, whose voices were ringing in music upon the air. The sun had left the sky, and the quiet of eventide was falling upon the bosom of nature. A loneliness such as she had not before experienced, and a feeling of helplessness fell upon the heart of Alice. She paused involuntarily and looked wistfully at the group of children, but recollecting herself, she moved on again, and entering a deep valley densely shaded by trees, soon lost sight of this attractive spot. Loneliness now changed to sadness. The thick wood made night seem even more rapidly approaching than it really was. Henry shrunk closer to her side, and asked, anxiously,

"Where are we going, Alice? Where will we sleep to-night?"

"We will ask them to let us sleep at the next house," Alice replied.

"Would n't they let us sleep there?" meaning the dwelling they had just passed.

"I do n't know, but they will at the next house we come to, I am sure. Let us walk faster; it is getting dark."

The children quickened their pace in order to get through the gloomy woods; but the further they advanced, the darker and gloomier it became, and no opening appeared ahead.

"O sister! it is so dark!" said Henry, drawing still closer to Alice.

"It will be light soon. We shall be through the woods in a little while," Alice replied in an encouraging voice, while her own heart was sinking.

But the darkness continued to gather gloomily around them, and the woods to become denser and denser.

"Let us go back," Alice said, stopping suddenly. "Perhaps they will let us stay all night where we saw the children."

"Oh yes! let us go back," quickly answered Henry. "I'm afraid here."

As hastily as they had been moving forward did the children now retrace their steps, but night had fallen upon them — the moon had not yet risen, and they were nearly an hour's walk from the habitation they sought. They had retraced not over half the distance, when Henry, overcome by weariness and fear, began to cry. Alice tried in vain to soothe him; but was unable. He stopped, and burying his face in the folds of her dress, refused to go any farther. Persuasion, entreaty, and every inducement Alice could hold out, were in vain. The child seemed to have lost all thought in fatigue and alarm.

Alice had stood for nearly five minutes endeavoring to pacify Henry and get him to walk on, when the sound of horses' feet and the rumbling of wagon wheels reached her ears above the mournful crying of her brother.

"For mercy's sake! what are you doing here? and who are you?" she heard a moment after, uttered by a woman's voice, as the wagon stopped close to where she was standing.

Never had a more welcome sound reached the ears of the frightened children. Henry's cries instantly ceased.

"We want some place to sleep to-night," said Alice. "Won't you give us some place to sleep until morning?"

"Bless us!—Children!—Who are you? Are you lost?"

Alice murmured "Yes," in a low voice.

"Where do you live?" said the woman, who was alone, in a small light wagon.

"We've got no home," replied Alice in a sad voice.

"No home! Bless me! Lost here at night, in this lonesome place! Come up, quick, into my wagon. I'll try and find you a place to sleep. Strange!"

The children needed no second invitation. Alice lifted up her brother, and then got in herself.

"What is your name, child?" asked the woman, kindly, as she pulled the rein and her horse started on again at a light trot.

"Alice."

"Alice what?"

"Alice Altemas."

"Where do you live?"

"Father went away and left my brother and me in New York a good while ago, and has not come back since. We don't know where he is."

"Where is your mother?"

"She is dead."

"Is there nobody to take care of you?"

"No ma'am."

"Why did you leave New York?"

These rapid questions embarrassed Alice. She did not wish to evade the truth, and she feared to answer directly lest she should be sent back to New York, and her brother to the Farms School. To the woman's last interrogation she was, therefore, silent; and also, to two or three others that followed, which she felt she dare not answer by telling the truth.

After riding along the main road for about half a mile, the woman turned her horse down a lane, which, in about ten minutes brought them to a small house. Here she drew the rein and the wagon stopped. Henry was, by this time, fast asleep. The woman got down, and lifted out the sleeping child tenderly, saying as she did so—

"Poor little fellow! He 's forgot all his troubles." Alice followed quickly, and then they entered the house, the door of which was opened by a stout girl.

"Tell John to put the horse away and then do you bring in supper," the woman said to the girl as she passed her. Henry was taken into a room adjoining the one into which they had entered, and laid on a bed. He still slept soundly.

The lighted candles which were upon the supper table gave both Alice and the woman an opportunity to observe each other, and their eyes met in an earnest look as the latter returned from the next room. There was something in the woman's face that instantly gave confidence to the heart of Alice, and there was something in the face of Alice that warmed the woman's feelings towards her.

Mrs. Belding, who had come across the children so opportunely, was a kind-hearted widow, who lived on a small place, which she owned, about twelve miles from Newark. She had been the

mother of three children, all now dead. One of them, a girl, died when about the age of Alice, and a little boy had been taken from her when just as old as Henry. The other died when a babe. The moment she saw the face of Alice, she was reminded of her lost daughter. Their eyes, complexion, and cast of features were the same.

"If these children have, indeed, no home and no mother," she said in her heart, "this shall be their home, and I will be their mother."

"Come dear," she said kindly to Alice, about five minutes after they had come in, and after the tea had been placed upon the table. "Come, sit up, and get some supper. We won't wake your brother, for I expect sleep is better to him than food."

This was spoke so encouragingly, and with something so warm in her voice, that Alice, who had felt but little inclination for food, experienced an almost instant return of appetite. She drew her chair to the table, and partook of a hearty meal. Mrs. Belding forbore asking her any more questions. Soon after tea she showed her into a room where Henry was lying upon a bed, and told her that she could sleep there for the night.

On the next morning, Alice, who felt an instinctive confidence in Mrs. Belding, related to her, freely, everything that had occurred since the death of her mother. The excellent woman to whom this artless relation was made, could not refrain from tears.

"My dear child," she said, with much tenderness, when she had concluded, "I know that all you have told me is true. Do not be afraid; I will not take you back to New York; Henry shall not be separated from you; this shall be your home; I will be your mother."

Alice looked into Mrs. Belding's face with a wondering countenance, and Henry left his sister's side and went and leaned against her.

"Do you think you would like to live here?" the excellent woman asked, as she took the little boy's hand in hers.

"Oh, yes, ma'am," he replied.

"If I am good to you, will you mind all I say to you?"

"Yes ma'am, I will always mind you."

"I am sure you will," and she laid her hand gently upon his head.

Alice was overcome and wept freely.

"And you will be like my own daughter to me, I know," said Mrs. Belding, looking into the face of Alice.

"Oh ma'am! I will do everything for you," replied Alice, the tears still streaming down her face.

And the child not only meant what she said, but she strove in every way to redeem her promise. Her little hands were busied from morning until night in trying to do what would be useful to Mrs. Belding, who grew more and more attached to her every day, and, in a short time, loved her almost as tenderly as she had loved her own child.

In this pleasant home, with nothing to trouble her mind but the thought of her father, Alice lived for two years with her brother. Mrs. Belding treated them as if they were her own children. No search that was made for them, ever extended into her neighborhood, and no one ever intruded upon them in their happy retreat, for none cared for them.

One day, Mrs. Belding came home from Newark, looking quite sober. She retired into her room, and fastening the door, sat down, and drawing a paper from her pocket, read over slowly an advertisement it contained, which was the cause of her disturbed state of mind. The advertisement ran thus:—

"Between two and three years ago, the subscriber went South, and left his two children, Alice about eleven, and Henry seven years of age, in the care of a woman named Mrs. Walton, who kept a boarding house at No. — Division street. Circumstances, not necessary to relate, prevented him from returning to New York until the present time. During the whole period of his absence, he did not once hear from his children. Now, he finds, that within a short time after he left the city, his little boy was sent to the Farm School on Long Island, and his daughter put out to service, and that his daughter went away from her place and succeeded in getting her brother from the Farm School without the knowledge of the Superintendent. Since that time all trace of them has been lost. Any information in regard to them will be most thankfully received at the ——— Hotel, by

"HENRY ALTEMAS."

After reading this over, Mrs. Belding sat and mused for a long

time. Then she seemed to have come to a fixed conclusion, for she rose up, saying in a firm voice, as she did so:

"They are his children, and I have no right to keep them. They must be restored to their father. I have had my reward for all I have done. But it will be hard to give them up."

The money of Mr. Altemas being nearly exhausted, and more than double the time for which he had obtained leave of absence from his employer having expired, while all search for and effort to obtain his children had proved fruitless, he found himself compelled to return back to the South. He had tried to get employment in New York, in order to remain there, and continue the search for Alice and Henry, but was unsuccessful in this. There was nothing left for him but to go back, earn some more money, and then come on and make new efforts to discover his children.

He had packed his trunk and was waiting gloomily, for the hour to arrive at which the cars were to start for the South, his mind filled with self-upbraidings and bitterness for the consequences that had followed his career of folly, when there was a knock at his room door. Supposing that it was the porter for his baggage, he called out for him to "come in." The door opened, but he did not turn to look at the man, merely remarking in a low voice—

"There it is, William. I will be down to the boat in a little while."

"Father!" said a low tremulous voice.

Altemas sprang to his feet with a sudden bound. An instant, and his two children were in his arms, while his heart was almost bursting with tumultuous joy.

In a few, plain words, we will give the rest. Mrs. Belding, a true-hearted woman as ever breathed, much as she loved the children, and pleasant as they had made her home, could not withhold them from their father. It cost her a severe struggle, but she did her duty, and immediately restored them. Mr. Altemas deferred returning to the South for a week, and, at the solicitation of Mrs. Belding, paid her a short visit with Alice and Henry. As he was leaving the cars at Newark, an old friend touched him on the shoulder, and ten minutes' conversation followed, during which Altemas briefly related what the reader

knows of his reform, and the recovery of his children. The old friend, an active Son of Temperance, was engaged in manufacturing in Newark, and it so happened, had just lost his clerk. He offered Altemas the place at seven hundred dollars a year. It was gladly accepted.

A few years have passed. Altemas holds the situation still, and his children remain with the excellent Mrs. Belding—now Mrs. Altemas—where they are very happy to see their father three or four times a week, as he returns *home* from the labors of the day, to find, in the smiles of an affectionate wife and the caresses of grateful children, the ample recompense of a life of industry and sobriety.

OUR CHILDREN: HOW SHALL WE SAVE THEM?

CHAPTER I.

Two beautiful children were playing on the floor in an elegantly furnished apartment,—one, a girl scarcely past her fifth summer, and the other, a sunny-haired boy, younger by at least two years. A living picture of happy innocence were these sportive children. No wonder that, ever and anon, the mother's eyes were lifted from the book she was reading, and fixed with a loving earnestness upon them; nor, that, resting the volume in her lap, she murmured to herself—

"Precious ones!"

And remained gazing at them for many minutes, until, observing her, the children left their play, and, as if drawn to her side by the invisible power of her love, came and leaned upon her, and looked up tenderly in her face. Receiving each a kiss, the children bounded away, and the mother, after following their motions with her eyes, lifted her book again and commenced reading. But, it was not long before the volume drooped in her hands, and, with a sigh so faint that it was scarcely audible, she leaned slightly forward and became lost in reverie. While she thus sat, the door opened, and a man, just in the prime of life, entered the room. Instantly the children sprang from the floor with cries of pleasure, and a smile went wreathing over the mother's face.

With his boy on one knee and his little girl on the other, the man sat down close beside his wife, and said, tenderly—

"I thought you looked sober, as I came in, Ellen; or was it only my fancy?"

"I do n't know that it was all fancy," returned the wife, with a quiet smile.

"Why should you be sober or thoughtful, dear? Have we not all that heart can wish? With sunny faces like these around you, how can a shadow fall upon your spirits?"

"I could not ask a change for the present, Edward. My cup is full. It is from the uncertain future that a shadow comes."

"The present only is ours. Let us be wise and enjoy the blessings it scatters about our feet."

"If these dear children could only remain as they are, innocent and happy, no thoughts would come to disturb the quiet of my heart. But that is not to be. Ah, Edward! To think of care and sorrow weighing down this head"—and the mother laid her small white hand among the curls that clustered about the head of her boy—"or evil affections finding a home in this dear child's heart! I can not tell you how sad the thought sometimes make me feel."

"But how vain all this is, dear. We cannot know the future. All are not oppressed with care or sorrow—all hearts are not filled with evil—why, then, should such things be feared for our children? Surely, their promise is fair!"

"Few, perhaps, have so fair a promise," said the wife. "But, where we can know nothing certain, the heart will, at times, feel the pressure of a doubt."

Just at that moment the bell announced dinner, and it turned their thoughts from the sober train into which they had fallen.

The parties here introduced were a wealthy merchant named Greenfield, his young wife, and their two beautiful children. Mr. Greenfield had married at the age of thirty-two, after having lived for ten or twelve years a life of pleasure and sensual gratification. Few men of his age had been through so much gayety and dissipation, and yet showed it as little; and there was none, except his wife, who knew that a single evil, of the many indulged in earlier years, had fixed itself upon him as a habit; and even she did not realize, in anything like an adequate sense, the consequences likely to flow from this habit, which showed itself, at times, in a too free use of intoxicating drinks.

Accustomed to take wine and spirits from youth upward, Mr. Greenfield's physical system gradually accommodated itself to the extra stimulant it was compelled to bear, and seemed not to be in the least injuriously affected by it. But this was only an appearance. Undreamed of by the young man, a morbid change

was taking place, and a habit forming itself, which, ere long, was to become in him a "second nature," and bear him onward as a stream bears the boat that is launched upon its surface. Long before his marriage, the impulses of this "second nature" were felt; but not in a way to create any doubt or alarm in his mind. On convivial occasions, and at "wine parties," he sometimes indulged in drinking, until reason's light grew dim, and the senses lost their nice discrimination. But, saving a slight feeling of mortification, and a resolve to be more guarded in future, such occurrences did not produce any serious effect upon his mind.

At the age of twenty-five, Mr. Greenfield succeeded to a large and well-based mercantile business, which he continued with something of the intelligence, energy and industry that distinguished his father, who had founded it and built thereon a handsome fortune. Inheriting a love of accumulation, and inspired by an ambition to be among the wealthiest, he devoted himself to the duties of his counting-room, during the hours of business, with untiring assiduity. But, when he left the atmosphere of trade, he entered that of pleasure, and sensualized his mind to a degree that would have startled him, had an image thereof been clearly reflected back upon his perceptions.

This life he led until the age of thirty-two, when he was united to a young and beautiful girl, the daughter of a merchant whose wealth quadrupled his own. Not solely by external considerations were the parties to this union influenced. A purer and stronger attraction drew them towards each other; and in joining their hands at the altar, their hearts acknowledged a deep and holy affection. And she who whispered her maiden vows was worthy of his love. A great change took place in Greenfield about the time he entered into a marriage engagement. Gay company was abandoned for the society of his betrothed; and youthful follies and vices no longer indulged, with the single exception of spirit and wine drinking, which he looked upon as nothing evil.

Tenderly did Mr. Greenfield love the gentle creature he had taken to his bosom; and when sweet children blessed their union, that love became a deeper and purer passion.

It is impossible for any one to pass a long period in sensual indulgence, such as had marked the early years of Mr. Greenfield's life, without having his mind debased in some degree, and the lower propensities stimulated beyond the limit of an easy

rational control. A principle of integrity, strengthened by an earnest and sincere love for his wife and children, was all-sufficient to keep Mr. Greenfield above unlawful self-indulgence, if the temptation to step aside into old paths assailed him. But corporeal pleasure, checked in one direction, naturally turned in another with a stronger current; and, in the gratification of his palate, Mr. Greenfield sought to appease the cravings of an eager sensuality. He, therefore, took great delight in the table, and eat and drank, daily, far more than nature really demanded. Mere eating and drinking, for the sake of gratifying the taste, is an evil that grows, and the longer it is continued, the more power does appetite gain, and the weaker becomes the reason when it opposes itself to any self-indulgence.

Very soon after the marriage of Mr. Greenfield, his thoughts began to minister to his appetite; and, from a deliberate purpose, without reflecting that such was the case, he so arranged his business, that, on returning home to dinner, he could dismiss all care from his mind. An hour was always spent at the table, at the end of which period a cup of strong coffee was taken to aid his stomach in the disposition of an overplus of highly-seasoned food, and a couple of hours spent in sleep to give time for the wine and brandy, taken with a most imprudent freedom, to pass from his confused brain. This was the history of every day, at the time we have introduced him to the reader, about six years subsequent to his marriage, and had been almost from the first.

To have said that Mr. Greenfield went to bed drunk every day after dinner, would have been felt, both by himself and wife, as a base and cruel slander. Yet, in sober truth, it was even so.

It may seem strange to some, yet the *intemperance* of her husband was not a source of anxiety to Mrs. Greenfield, for she did not know his daily self-indulgence by that startling and appalling name. He never came home to her in liquor. He did not act unreasonably. His business was never neglected, nor were his evenings spent in clubs or convivial parties. But, when he indulged too freely, he concealed the fact under the mantle of sleep. Not only was his wife deceived; but Mr. Greenfield, by the very orderly way, so to speak, in which he indulged his appetite, remained half ignorant of the fact that he drank to intoxication almost daily.

On the day in which we have introduced the merchant to our

readers, he came home, as usual, with his thoughts more fully occupied with what he was to eat and drink than with any thing else. Slight expressions of impatience, made on more than one occasion, at having to wait a short period beyond the usual dining hour, had caused his wife so to arrange affairs as to have dinner announced in as brief a space as possible after he came in from his business. But a few minutes, therefore, elapsed before the bell rang, and Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield, each holding a child by the hand, descended to the dining room. A glass of brandy and water came first in order, by way of preparation for the viands that were to enter, successively, into Mr. Greenfield's stomach. Then he took his highly seasoned plate of soup, and eat it with the relish of an epicure. Between his soup and fish, came another glass of brandy and water; and with the meats, two or three kinds of which were on the table, salads, condiments, and brandy, were mingled in liberal proportions. During the early part of the meal there was little conversation; but after the brandy and rich food had begun to stimulate the blood of Mr. Greenfield, his tongue became free, and he had much to say that was interesting and agreeable to both his wife and children. Before, however, the dessert had been eaten, conversation began to flag, for the merchant was losing the easy control of his vocal organs. With the dessert came a bottle of wine, a glass of which was taken by Mrs. Greenfield; her husband drank the rest.

When all the courses had passed, and while the merchant was sipping the last of his bottle of wine, a single cup of strong coffee, almost as black as ink, was brought in by a servant. Into this three or four large lumps of sugar were dissolved, making the liquid like syrup. After taking this, leisurely, with a spoon, Mr. Greenfield ascended to his chamber, with every sense confused, and really so much intoxicated, that, if he had ventured into the street, he would have reeled along the pavement. There, torpid as an anaconda after dining upon a deer, he slept away the effects of his debauch—for such it really was.

Mrs. Greenfield, who had eaten, as she always did, lightly, passed the afternoon in reading, after having sent her two children out to take the air. They returned before their father came down, and were clambering about their mother and telling of all they had seen, when he joined them in the drawing-room, his face red and tumid, and his whole appearance that of one almost

as much asleep as awake. Not until after tea did he seem like himself again. Then, with a heart full of affection for his wife and children, and a mind clear and intelligent, he passed the evening in the enjoyment of true domestic happiness. He sported with his little ones, Henry and Florence, for an hour, until sleep weighed gently down their eyelids; and after they were laid to rest, he bent over them, and gazed upon their beautiful faces—more beautiful in sleep—with a feeling of tenderness not to be uttered in words. Deeply and fervently did he love these gentle ones. Their babes asleep, Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield spent the evening in reading and conversation, the time passing pleasantly with both. At the hour of retiring, Mr. Greenfield ordered a bottle of wine. His wife took a single glass, as at dinner time, and he drank the rest.

On the next morning, Mr. Greenfield felt a nervous tremor and sinking; to subdue which he took, soon after rising, a glass of brandy. This made all right, and prepared him to enjoy his breakfast, and to go forth and enter upon the business of another day. At twelve o'clock a lunch was taken, and, with this, another glass of brandy; and at three o'clock, he returned home to deprave himself by the indulgence of a grovelling and inordinate appetite, as he had done the day before.

The history of one day in the life of Mr. Greenfield, gives the history of years. Thus he had gone on, almost since the time of his marriage, and the evil, as a natural result, was increasing. Having presented this history of a day, in order to give a clearly discernible cause for results which we shall exhibit in the course of our narrative, we will now pass to a portrayal of the sad effects we design to present. Let the reader bear in mind, that the habit of drinking was formed at the time of Mr. Greenfield's marriage, and that this habit had daily confirmation from that period onward.

CHAPTER II.

Two lovelier children than those of Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield, are rarely seen. Florence grew daily like her mother; but Henry had every feature of his father, and there was a striking

resemblance in their dispositions. As the boy's mind opened, this became more and more apparent. By both of their parents were these children tenderly loved; but, for Henry, a certain feeling of pride mingled with affection. As year after year went by, the boy's intellect expanded with wonderful rapidity, and he gave promise of future eminence when manhood came to give maturity, force, and character to his mind.

The power of habit is very strong; even the habit of putting limit on sensual indulgence. By this power of habit was Mr. Greenfield saved from becoming an abandoned drunkard. Business demanded a certain portion of his time, and, in order successfully to attend to this, he kept himself free from the disturbing effects of liquor during the business part of the day. True, he took a glass of brandy every morning, early; but this was to restore to his own stimulated and weakened nerves the artificial strength that had wasted itself during the night; and he took another glass with his luncheon at twelve o'clock, but that produced about the same effect as his morning glass, and did not, sensibly, cloud his mind. It was after the business of the day was over that he gave the reins to his appetite, and then he had leisure to sleep off the effects.

Thus it went on, day after day, and year after year, with but a small apparent increase, except to the eyes of his wife, who could see that the indulgence was freer than in former times, and the stupor that followed, deeper and more apoplectic. There came, too, a certain dullness of the perceptions, and an increasing sensuality, that, while it did not alarm her mind, for she hardly understood its meaning, sensibly oppressed her feelings. But the veil at last fell from her eyes, and fell suddenly; and the eyes of her husband were opened at the same time,—not by any suddenly occurring event, but by the introduction into their minds, of a clearly seen truth.

Henry had grown up, in everything meeting the expectations and wishes of his parents, until he had reached the age of eighteen, when a sudden fear in regard to him took hold of his parents' hearts.

A gentleman, well advanced in years, of much observation and reflection, dined with Mr. Greenfield about this time. An hour earlier than usual, the merchant came home with this gentleman, and while they sat conversing, something led to a remark on the power of habit, and the latter said—

"We all acknowledge this power as affecting ourselves, but how few of us think of its influence upon our children. And yet it is an undoubted fact, that we transmit to our offspring predispositions in exact agreement with any habits of good or evil that we may confirm in ourselves."

"Do you really think so?" enquired Mrs. Greenfield, with much interest apparent in her voice.

"There is not a question of it, madam," was replied. "Do we not see in children a uniform resemblance to their parents, both in body and mind? There could not be a more perfect likeness between two persons than there is between you and your daughter; and the same may be said of Henry and his father. You can best tell how nearly their mental qualities correspond with your own. Now, the mind is made up of affections, which take forms of thought, and by means of the body produce actions. It is not thought, nor is it action, that parents transmit to their children; but affections; and these must be similar to their own. These affections, as they gain strength, take to themselves appropriate thoughts; and, as the body matures, action in correspondence follows. Of course, the thought and action will be either good or evil, in agreement with the affections that produced them."

"There is force in that," said Mr. Greenfield, with a thoughtful air. "But it is very wonderful! We do not give to our offspring a body fully formed; nor do we give thought; but only a mysterious spiritual organism, with power to take, from the higher elements of nature, materials with which to elaborate a body, in perfect conformity to its wants in the physical world; and with power to act by means of thought."

"Yes; that is all. It is our affections—our propensities or qualities of mind that we transmit to our children; and this is why their bodies resemble ours; for it is the soul that forms the body for its own use, and flows into it and animates it with what is peculiarly its own. Therefore, if we are in the love and practice of what is good and true, we give to our children inclinations to the same things; but, if we are selfish, sensual, and evil-minded, our children will be born with like propensities. By the forms of affection that we make to ourselves, we bless or curse our children. If good, we help them on to a higher regeneration; if evil, we retard this good work, and may be the means of their

destruction. The law which governs in the natural as well as the spiritual world—in the body as well as the mind—is the law of similarity between cause and effect. A bitter fountain never has and never can send forth sweet water. An evil-minded father cannot give pure affections to his child. The history of the world's declension, since the fall of man, sadly corroborates this."

"What a momentous truth!" ejaculated, or rather sighed, Mrs. Greenfield. "And yet, who thinks of it? Whose love of children leads to a denial of selfish impulses?"

"Alas! that it is so," returned the friend. "Men toil early and late to accumulate wealth to bless their children; but never think of restraining a selfish impulse or overcoming an evil desire, in order to lessen the transmissible force of evil."

"You spoke of habit affecting our children," said Mr. Greenfield. "Is that so to a great extent?"

"Undoubtedly. Whatever we do from long-continued habit, we make our own. Or, in other words, what is done from habit, impresses the mind permanently. The mind, you understand, of course, to be an organized spiritual substance, capable of receiving and retaining impressions. Now, only what the mind possesses in regard to form and quality, can it transmit; and things habitually done by any one must come from a fixed state or quality of mind."

"Then all our habits will be reproduced in our children?" remarked Mr. Greenfield, who felt a good deal of interest in what was said.

"All our habits will affect them; though all may never be fully reproduced in action, owing to counteracting forces. The habit of the father may be neutralized, so to speak, by a habit of the mother; or the inherited inclination may lay quiescent through lack of excitement. Still, as a general thing, in this sense, 'the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.' The evil that any man does from a willing mind, gives to his children an inclination to do likewise. All sensual indulgences have a like effect."

"Then the children of an habitual drunkard," said Mrs. Greenfield, "will be inclined to intemperance?"

"Most assuredly, if born *after* the father's fall from sobriety. Some have wondered why, in this age, there was, in the mass of the people, such an inclination to excessive drinking. The reason

is found in a widely spread hereditary predisposition to intemperance. Our ancestors, through one or two generations back, drank habitually. At first, drinking to intoxication was rare. But, it was found that the people of a second generation, had not the power to use wine or spirits within a sober limit; and the reason was, because they *inherited* a love for stimulating drinks. Drunkenness then became, suddenly, a wide-spread evil, and, at one time, almost threatened the ruin of society. It conquered the strongest intellects, and darkened the brightest genius. Everywhere appeared its ravages;—in the palace and hovel,—in the pulpit, and at the bar,—in the physician's office and in the mechanic's shop. Like the locusts of Egypt, it covered the land. Various were the hostile attitudes assumed by the friends of temperance in order to meet and overcome this terrible foe. But, until, under Divine Providence, a principle of total abstinence from all stimulating drinks was adopted, resistance proved almost in vain. That met the evil, for it took away all excitement from the hereditary or acquired love of drink."

"It is plain then," remarked Mr. Greenfield, "that if a man indulge freely in drinking, he excites the hereditary love of liquor in himself, should he possess it, and transmits it with accumulated force to his children?"

"Without doubt this is so. And were it not that most children of drinking parents are born before their progenitors had indulged the degrading appetite to a serious extent, a state of things incomparably worse than we have ever seen would have existed."

Dinner was announced at this stage of the conversation, and Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield conducted their guest to the dining room. Henry was at college and Florence at a boarding school. The dinner party consisted, therefore, of but three persons. Upon the table were two decanters, one containing brandy and the other old rye whiskey; and on a side table was a wine cooler containing four bottles of wine. After the first course had passed, Mr. Greenfield handed the brandy to his guest and said—

"Here is some fine old brandy from the London docks. Will you try some of it?"

The gentleman smiled and replied—

"Excuse me, if you please. It would be a dangerous experiment for me to put a glass of that to my lips."

"Indeed! Why so?" returned Mr. Greenfield evincing some surprise.

"You remember the conversation which has just passed. I have a birthright fondness for all kinds of intoxicating drinks; and at one time of life, almost destroyed myself, body and soul, from its indulgence. But, by total abstinence I was saved. To taste again, would only excite and inflame the dormant appetite, and for me to tempt myself by such an act, would be little less than insanity."

Mr. Greenfield took the decanter of brandy which he had reached to his guest, and was about filling his own glass, when some thought, glancing through his mind, caused him to hesitate and replace it upon the table.

"How long is it since you gave up the use of brandy?" he inquired.

"Thirty years."

"So long?"

"Yes. I am now sixty-five, and have not tasted a drop of brandy for thirty years. But, I had drank long and deep before I abandoned the debasing habit, and alas, was afterwards doomed to see the consequences of my error visited upon my child. In the very prime of manhood, and when he gave promise of a brilliant, useful and honorable future, the accursed appetite which had come to him as an heir-loom through two generations, overmastered him, and he fell, never to rise again. My son fills a drunkard's grave."

The old man's voice trembled, and there was a flush of feeling on his face. But the signs of emotion passed quickly, and he added—

"Have I not good reasons for letting the cup pass me untasted?"

"Reasons the most powerful," replied Mr. Greenfield, with much seriousness of manner.

A conversation so sober, did not suit a pleasant dinner occasion, and the guest changed it to a more cheerful theme. One course followed another, and strange to tell, the brandy remained untasted, an occurrence that had not taken place for nearly thirty years where Mr. Greenfield was at the table.

With the dessert came some choice wines, and the bottle was again handed to the guest. But he declined with graceful politeness, and said—

"To a morbid appetite, even wine is a poison, and stimulates the mind into a temporary insanity. I dare not taste it."

"Surely wine will not have that effect," said Mr. Greenfield.

"It will, assuredly. There is no law for a man whose taste has been corrupted, but that of entire abstinence."

Mr. Greenfield filled his own glass and that of his wife; but the latter remained untouched. While taking the dessert, the merchant drank two or three glasses of wine, and then took his usual cup of strong coffee. For the first time in many years, he retired from his own table a sober man. He had strange feelings; for the singular conversation of his guest had turned his thoughts into an entirely new current. He could think of little else, save hereditary transmissions. The question forced itself upon him—"How far have I disturbed the equilibrium of my son's mind, by giving him some inordinate propensity confirmed in myself by habit?" And he trembled in spirit, as he remembered at how early a period in life he had indulged himself deeply in the pleasures of drinking.

Not far different from those of her husband were the feelings of Mrs. Greenfield. The guest retired; but he left behind him troubled thoughts. He had brought in a light which revealed an unimagined danger; and they who had been happy in their blind security, were now trembling with alarm.

CHAPTER III.

The words of their guest did not grow silent in the ears of Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield, but were ever repeated to them as by another and more solemn voice. Not, however, until Mr. Greenfield made some effort to break through a habit of long confirmation, did he fully comprehend their import. While he went on in the old way, he was like a vessel gliding along with the current of a downward flowing river. All was smooth and calm. He was scarcely conscious of the progress he made or the force of the stream upon which he was moving so quietly. But, the moment an anchor was cast, there came a rush of waters, and, for the first time, the power of the current was felt.

It seemed but a little thing in the eyes of Mr. Greenfield, when the subject first presented itself to his mind, for him to give up

the free indulgence of his appetite for stimulating drinks. But when he made the trial, he discovered, alas! his error. The slumbering giant he had been nourishing for years, awoke within him, and demanded the old supply, and he had not sufficient reso lution to refuse the demand. Conscious, however, of danger, where he had, before, feared no evil, Mr. Greenfield endeavored to lay restriction upon himself—to drink within a certain limit. But after the first few glasses, he forgot his good resolutions, and when he arose from the dinner table, he groped his way as usual, up to his chamber, and there slept off the effects of his sensual indulgence.

But, when a man like Mr. Greenfield, in whom some virtues and good impulses remain, is once made sensible that danger lurks in a favorite path, all sense of security and pleasure in that path, though it may still be trod, is forever gone. When, therefore, the fumes of wine and brandy exhaled from his brain, and thought became, once more, clear, a troubled feeling was left behind. He felt that he was in bondage, and too weak to break the cords that were around him.

The first time that Henry came home from college to spend a vacation, after his parents had been startled from their false security, both saw, with feelings of indescribable pain, that he showed a fondness for eating and drinking, especially the latter, beyond what young men of his age usually exhibit. A week's observation and reflection increased, rather than diminished their anxiety, which rose to a pitch of anguish on receipt of the following letter by Mr. Greenfield, from the President of the College:—

My Dear Sir: I have observed, with regret, that your son exhibits a fondness for stimulating drinks beyond what is usual in persons of his age. If I did not think him in danger, I would not awaken your fears by this communication; but, having seen so many promising young men fall by the hands of intemperance and become lost to themselves and society, I deem it but my duty to give you timely warning. I understand that he keeps a case of wine in his room, and uses it daily, with immoderate freedom. Every week, I am told, he joins about a dozen of his fellow-students in a convivial party in the town, and usually returns to the college buildings at midnight, in a state little short of intoxi-

cation. I have, on two occasions, conversed with him on the subject; but he considered my allusion to his weakness as altogether uncalled for, and met my kind remonstrances with anger. One of our Professors has, also, talked to him, but with no better result. It pains me, my dear sir, to be the medium of such a communication, but a regard for the well-being of your son must be my apology.

Yours, with respect, &c.

For a few days Mr. Greenfield kept this communication to himself, but unable, in the bewilderment and distress it occasioned, to decide what steps to take, he placed the letter in the hands of his wife. The shock to Mrs. Greenfield was terrible. For a short time it completely prostrated her both in body and mind. The anxiety and alarm shown by Henry on account of the sudden indisposition of his mother, led his father to suppose that a knowledge of the cause might produce the most beneficial result. Under this view, he said to him, in answer to his earnest enquiries regarding his mother's sudden illness—

"The cause, Henry, is with yourself."

"With me!" exclaimed the young man, turning pale.

"Yes, Henry, with you," replied Mr. Greenfield, his voice and countenance reflecting the troubled state of his feelings. "Read that. It will explain all." And he handed to the young man the letter he had received from the President of the College.

Henry read the letter over twice, before he looked up or made a remark. His father's eyes were fixed upon him intently, in order to observe every shade of the effect produced.

"The malignant scoundrel!" at length fell from the young man's lips, as he crushed the letter in his hands. He arose as he spoke, and commenced moving about the floor. His face was flushed, and his eyes shot forth glances of anger.

"Henry, is that letter true?" asked Mr. Greenfield.

"It is not true in the sense he would have it understood. He makes it appear that I am on the high road to ruin."

"You may be, my son," said Mr. Greenfield, calmly, "if the facts stated are true. A case of wine in your room! You are too young for that, Henry."

"I can't see, father, what harm the wine being in my room is going to do. I don't drink any more than I would if it were

not there. The President has only made it the plea for a most cruel and uncalled-for communication. And to think that mother should have seen it!"

"I do not believe, Henry, that he had anything in view but your good. The letter bears that upon its face. Your convivial parties in town, and consequent late hours, were wrong. Such things are exceedingly dangerous, and yearly lead hundreds into ruinous courses of life."

"They will never lead me into ruinous courses," said the young man, who still walked the floor and manifested a good deal of angry excitement.

"Not if you give them up in future. But, if you continue them, your destruction is certain."

"Oh, father! Why will you talk so! Why will you make out of a little thing like this a matter of so much importance!" exclaimed Henry, throwing himself with an air of abandonment into the chair from which he had, a few moments before, arisen.

"It is no light matter, my son."

"Cannot a young man drink a glass of wine without being in danger? I never heard this from you before. I have always seen wine and brandy on our table at home, and have always been permitted to take them."

"But it is plain, Henry, from what I have learned, that you now use these articles with a freedom that must inevitably lead to bad consequences."

"I do not think so, father. I am sure it is not so."

And to this position the young man firmly adhered; at the same time that he manifested the most bitter resentment towards the President of the College, and did not hesitate to avow it as his intention to call him to an account for what he had done on his return, should he go back to the Institution.

For the distress and prostration of his mother, Henry manifested the liveliest sympathy; but he would not admit, for a moment, that the slightest ground existed for the unhappy effect produced on her mind by the communication which had been received. That was, he averred, a highly exaggerated statement, and dictated by no friendly feelings.

For two or three days Mrs. Greenfield kept her room, and then, looking pale and troubled, she once more resumed her usual place in her family. The effect upon Henry was, not to cause

an abandonment of the pleasures of drinking, but to excite a constant feeling of anger towards the President of the College. He never saw his mother that he did not inwardly execrate the person who, by throwing a gleam of light upon his path, had shown to his parents the dangerous course it was taking. As for himself, he believed not in the alleged danger, and could not comprehend why his father and mother should so causelessly distress themselves. His father had always used liquors freely, and still continued to do so; and he was not a drunkard. So he reasoned with himself.

Every day, the brandy and wine were upon the table as usual; Mr. Greenfield did not see how he could make a dinner without them. He partook freely, and it was not wonderful that Henry did the same. As for Mrs. Greenfield, the single glass that was filled for her, remained untasted, and could her husband and son have realized fully her feelings when she saw the sparkling liquor pass their lips, they would have dashed their glasses to the floor.

It did not escape the observation of Mr. Greenfield that Henry enjoyed his wine even more highly than he did his food; and that he filled his glass far too often.

"Is it right to place this temptation before him?" was a question that arose, naturally, in the father's mind, and he could not answer it in the affirmative. While he was debating the subject, Mrs. Greenfield said to him—

"I am afraid we do wrong in placing either wine or brandy on our table, while Henry is at home. What do you think?"

"I do n't know," returned Mr. Greenfield, in a serious voice. He was not fully prepared to give up his favorite indulgence without an argument in its favor. "I 'm afraid he does drink rather too much."

"It makes me very unhappy. And he is so unconscious of danger. I tried to speak to him yesterday about it, but he became impatient at my allusion to the subject, and said it was all on account of that letter. If something is not done to turn him from the way in which he has commenced walking, his ruin is inevitable. Oh! husband, we should stop at no sacrifice in order to save him."

The thought that this love of drink manifesting itself at so early an age, was hereditary in his child, came flashing over the mind of Mr. Greenfield, and he said, with a despondency of tone that well expressed his feelings—

"What *will* save him?"

"We know not," replied his wife; "but now that we are aware of his danger, let us do all in our power to withdraw him from temptation. So long as he sees you partaking freely, counsel and warning will be useless; for, he will say, if these things do not hurt you, they cannot hurt him."

"True, true. Though I am not hurt by them, yet they shall be banished from my table."

A light glanced over the face of Mrs. Greenfield, and she said—

"I hope much from this change."

More was meant by this than her husband understood.

Accordingly, on the next day, when the family assembled for dinner, neither wine nor brandy was on the table. The first impulse of Henry, who perceived this almost as soon as he sat down, was to remind his father of the omission; but the true reason suggesting itself to his mind, he remained silent and observant. Both his father and mother tried to introduce and carry on a cheerful conversation; but he could not join in it, except by a forced word now and then, for the wine bottle was before his imagination, and his thoughts were busy with the supposed reason for its banishment. Neither Mr. Greenfield nor his son, enjoyed the rich and dainty food that was spread with an epicurean hand before them. One thing was lacking—an appetite stimulated by wine. Scarcely half the usual time was passed at the table, and soon after they arose, both left the house.

Henry muttered to himself as he walked along the hall to the street door—

"This is too much! To be treated as if that letter were true in the broadest sense!"

But he did not reflect, that the very reason why he had little appetite for his dinner, and why he was now leaving the house, proved the truth of the President's inferences and fears. Young as he was, the first barrier placed between his hereditary and acquired taste for stimulating drink, showed the movement of a strong current that was bearing him towards a coast upon which hundreds and thousand had already been shipwrecked.

On leaving the house, Henry went to a fashionable drinking establishment, and seated himself at a table covered with newspapers, ordered a waiter to bring him some brandy-punch. Ten

minutes afterwards, on raising his eyes suddenly, he encountered those of his father. Mr. Greenfield was sitting in an alcove, before a table, on which was a bottle of wine. A draft of air had blown aside the curtain that hid him from general observation, and on looking up, he saw his son with an empty glass beside him, and Henry saw his father indulging in the pleasures of which both had been deprived at dinner. Another movement, and the curtain fluttered back to its place, and the elder Mr. Greenfield was alone again. Neither the father nor son felt very pleasant at this mutual discovery. The former had taken about a fourth of his bottle of wine. When, a quarter of an hour afterwards, he came slowly and half stealthily from his hiding-place, he left behind him more than half the bottle he had hoped to enjoy. Henry was gone.

The young man was not at home at tea-time; and did not come in until towards ten o'clock, when, instead of joining his parents in the family sitting-room, he went direct to his chamber. It would not have made their sleep any sweeter had they seen him.

CHAPTER IV.

Henry Greenfield did not return to college. He expressed an unwillingness to meet the President again, after what had occurred, and his parents were equally unwilling, under the circumstances, to have him go back, and remain for a year longer removed from the sphere of their observation and influence. The mental loss to the young man they deeply deplored; but that was a small consideration placed against the moral injury he was likely to sustain among his old associations. The design had always been to educate Henry for a merchant; and accordingly, on leaving college, he entered his father's counting-room, where, by his quickness, intelligence, and the interest he took in business, he inspired the liveliest hopes for the future. But over these hopes hung, ever, a threatening cloud.

The meeting of Henry and his father in the refectory, was, to the latter, a most painful and mortifying incident; but it produced a salutary change, for it awoke a train of reflections that ended in this pointed question—

"If this habit is so strong in me that I transmit to my child an inordinate desire for stimulating drinks, am I not also in danger?"

Mr. Greenfield could not answer in the negative. He was in danger, and he felt it.

"For my own sake and for the sake of my boy," he said, "I must break through this habit."

This, he clearly understood to be no easy matter; for, in the temporary opposition already made, he had discovered that he was grasped in the hands of a giant, and that freedom would only come as the result of a resistant force almost superhuman. But, once fully sensible of his position, and clearly alive to the danger of his son, he resolved upon a desperate struggle for liberty. And, as he had a strong will, strengthened by a natural pride of consistency, he was successful. Wine nor brandy never came back to his table—were never again seen in his house. Nor did he, under any pretence, use them.

Thus free himself, he could, with more consistency and hope of success, seek to work out the freedom of his son. But, alas! he found it utterly impossible to awaken in the mind of Henry a sense of danger. When he sought to induce him not to drink any kind of intoxicating liquor, the young man would answer—

"I am conscious of no danger, father. I do not drink more freely than other young men. You seem to imagine that I have really become intemperate."

"Not intemperate, Henry; but in danger of becoming so; and my warning is meant to be timely. I know, far better than it is possible for you to know, the peril you are in. Believe me, it is great."

"Did you not use these things at my age, father?"

"Yes; I own that I did."

"And you have used them ever since. But you have never become their slave."

Mr. Greenfield could not confess his weakness to his son; neither could he tell him the whole truth touching the real ground of danger. That would have been too humiliating.

"I have given up their use entirely," was the simple reply.

"Not because you think it wrong for you to drink wine or strong liquors, but in the hope that I would follow your example. I am sorry for this, father. You deprive yourself of a stimulant

necessary at your age, as well as from long habit; without influencing me in the least, because I see no reason for doing what you propose."

"No, Henry. It is not necessary for me. I am better without it. I feel satisfied of this every day. Heaven knows, I wish I had never tasted any beverage stronger than water!"

The reader can imagine how sincerely these last words were uttered.

But, argument and persuasion were alike useless. Henry's appetite was too deeply seated in the very substance of his life. He loved the taste of liquor too well to think of giving it up. But, with this love, which was not so freely indulged after his return to New York as it had been during the last year he spent at college, was a total unconsciousness of danger, notwithstanding the alarm sounded by his parents. Other young men, with whom he associated, drank as occasion offered; wine flowed like water in many companies into which he was thrown; yet no one thought himself in the way to intemperance. No; it was only a chimera conjured up by his parents, in consequence of the letter they had received from the President of the College.

The banishment of all intoxicating drinks from the table of Mr. Greenfield, and their entire expulsion from his house, had the effect to deceive him in regard to the extent to which they were used by his son, who was regularly at his post in the counting-room, and active in the discharge of all the duties that devolved upon him in the business. It was in the evenings that Henry indulged himself most freely. But a long time did not go by before the effects of these evening indulgences were visible to the mother's anxiously observant eyes, in the changed expression of his face. She could do nothing, however, but look on, and wait with trembling for the result. Fully alive to his real danger, yet without the power to ward it off, her daily life was one of intense anxiety and fear.

As time moved on, it seemed to Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield, that the evil so dreaded was long delayed, or, indeed, might not visit them. Two or three years had gone by, and yet no very alarming symptoms were manifested.

"It may be," said the mother, one day, "that the stand we have taken towards Henry has saved him."

"I have hoped as much," returned Mr. Greenfield; "yet I

tremble while I hope. Until he cut himself off entirely from indulgence in drink, there is great danger."

"A year or two may give his reason more control."

"Or confirm an overmastering evil habit."

"Let us hope for the best," said the mother, whose mind was rising into some degree of confidence. "There was a time when my heart was sick with fear. I do not feel so now. Something tells me that my son will not fall into the gulf that seemed opening at his feet."

Mr. Greenfield saw more than did the mother, for his observation was wider in extent. He had, therefore, less confidence. But he did not seek to throw a cloud over her feelings.

On that very evening Henry was absent at tea-time, and to the mother's enquiries, Mr. Greenfield said but little; though her questions evidently made him even more serious than he was before.

"Was Henry at the store during the afternoon?" asked Mrs. Greenfield, after they had retired from the tea-table.

"Yes, until about five o'clock."

"Where did he go then?"

"Two young men called to see him, and he went away with them."

"Who were they?"

"I do n't know."

"Did you ever see them before?"

"Yes. They called to see him last week."

No more was said. Mr. Greenfield sat down to read, and Mrs. Greenfield and her daughter Florence, now a young lady, went up stairs and spent the evening in some light employment. Ten o'clock at length came, and Florence retiring to her own chamber, Mrs. Greenfield came down to the sitting-room.

"Has n't Henry come yet?" she asked.

"No — not yet," replied her husband. "It is more than probable that he has gone to the opera, and will not be home before eleven o'clock. He goes frequently, you know."

"Yes. But he does not take Florence with him as often as he should. Indeed, he shows her very few attentions of this kind. His neglect of her pains me."

"She is attached to him."

"Oh yes! Tenderly. She would do almost any thing to gratify him. I wish he were equally considerate of her."

For half an hour they continued to converse about the young man, when the street-door bell was rung violently. Without waiting for a servant to answer the summons, Mr. Greenfield stepped quickly into the hall, and going to the door, opened it. As he did so, the body of a man fell in heavily against him, and rolled upon the floor. Mrs. Greenfield had followed her husband, for there was a misgiving at her heart. As the man struck the floor, the light of the hall lamp fell on his face, and showed the flushed and disfigured countenance of Henry Greenfield.

A cry of pain was uttered by the mother as she clasped her hands together and sprang forward. The moment Mr. Greenfield understood that it was his son, in a state of drunken insensibility, he returned to the door, which yet stood partly open. But no one was there. Those who had brought him home had hastily retired.

But few can realize what was suffered during that almost sleepless night by the father and mother of the unhappy young man. From the lips of Mrs. Greenfield, the cup, out of which she had begun to sip a draught of hope, was dashed to the ground; and she felt, in the keenness of her despair, as if the very life would fail in her heart. But, to the sterner grief of Mr. Greenfield was added a weight of self-reproaches that almost maddened him at times. If his son were lost, it would be, he felt, in consequence of his own sensual indulgence, whereby he had transmitted a life tainted by a vicious inclination. He had cursed his son with a legacy of evil instead of good. The words of the old man, who had been his guest, came back with a distinctness so clear that it seemed as if he were but just uttering them. Once he tried to negate the whole theory advanced; and for a short time, argued strongly against it as absurd. But his own perceptions of truth swept away the arguments he advanced; for they were light as gossamer.

The dawn found both weary with thought and sorrow. Nature then gave way, and they sunk into a brief, but troubled sleep. All except Henry met at the breakfast-table, half an hour later than usual.

"What keeps Henry?" asked Florence, looking earnestly first at her father and then at her mother, wondering as she did so why their faces wore so troubled an aspect.

Mrs. Greenfield turned to the waiter, and directed him to go

and call Henry. When the waiter came down, he said that the young man did not feel very well, and wished a cup of coffee sent up to him. This was done. The meal was finished in silence, and Mr. Greenfield went off to his store.

Henry made his appearance about twelve o'clock, with all the evidences of his evening's debauch about him. Mr. Greenfield felt it to be his duty to allude to the matter; but the allusion was met on the part of his son in such an impatient spirit, that his lips trembled on the words of remonstrance he was uttering, and then became silent.

In the afternoon the young man went away again and was absent at tea-time. It was after twelve o'clock when he came home; and he was so much intoxicated that he could just stagger up to his room, where he threw himself upon the bed and remained all night without removing his clothes. Daylight found him sober, both physically and mentally. He had been deeply mortified in consequence of what had occurred on the evening before the last, and although signs of impatience were manifested when his father alluded to the subject, in his shame and repentance he had resolved never again to let his appetite lead him astray from sobriety. How little force there was in this resolution, became sadly apparent even to his mind; for scarcely twenty-four hours elapsed, ere he had again fallen. The groan that issued from his lips, as he arose and clasped his hands tightly against his throbbing temples, attested the anguish of his spirit.

"To degrade and debase myself in this way!" he murmured. "Oh! it maddens me to think of it. Others can enjoy a glass of wine without running into excess. But the moment I put the generous draught to my lips, a feverish, delightful excitement runs through my veins, tempting me to indulgence, until I pass the bounds of moderation. Why is this so? I have a vigorous constitution—and, I believe, a strong mind. I do not understand it."

And, with his hands still bound upon his temples, he sat questioning himself as to his weakness; but, without obtaining the true answer. That this weakness was constitutional, or derived by inheritance—an heir-loom of evil—was a truth beyond the ability of his mind to conceive, for there was nothing to lead him to such a conclusion. That his father had indulged a habit of

drinking to excess, was something he did not know—something of which he had not dreamed. And, as to the doctrine of hereditary transmissions, he had never heard of it; or, if it had chanced to gleam across his mind in any of his miscellaneous readings, it had never presented itself to him in its real light as a truth of most vital and practical importance. In a word, he did not know that he was in more imminent danger than many others, because of a natural inclination to over-indulgence derived from his father. Had this truth been then made clear to his mind, it might have saved him. But who was there, beside his father and mother, that understood his real danger? Who but they knew the painful secret? And their lips were sealed. The father could not tell his shame, and the mother's heart shrunk from uncovering it before her child. He was walking, therefore, in a perilous way, yet all unconscious of impending evil.

At breakfast time, Henry Greenfield met the family as usual. He had little appetite for food, but he forced himself to eat in order not to attract more observation than he felt was already directed towards him.

On leaving the house, he went to a noted drinking establishment, and called for brandy and water. This act did not arise from a purpose of the mind, but was the result of mere inclination; or, more properly speaking, a desire for the stimulant he had accustomed himself to take. The brandy brought back his already weakened nerves to their lost tension, and he felt, in consequence, much better, and in a condition to attend to business as usual.

Having lost the control of himself two evenings in succession, Henry was more upon his guard when he went into drinking company; and months elapsed before he again fell into the disgraceful condition of absolute drunkenness. Yet, he indulged, every day, freely, thus giving strength to his natural appetite, and weakening the force of his good resolutions.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Greenfield had said a word of the instant conclusion to which their minds had come, from the position laid down by the old friend to whom we have referred. The former believed his wife unconscious of danger to Henry from this cause; and she, with the natural delicacy of one bearing her relation, avoided, with the most scrupulous care, the utterance of a word which would lead her husband to imagine that she

believed their son in peril from hereditary taint. The consequence was, that the fear of each was locked in its own bosom, and was more constantly present to the mind, because it was unuttered.

How deep was their anxiety, few can imagine; for few have realized, so fully as they did, the perilous way their child was treading. They saw him progressing, step by step; and yet, could not sound in his ears an adequate warning. Gradually, and to the eyes of his father and mother, apparently, the arms of the foul demon of intemperance were clasped more and more tightly around him. In his twenty-fifth year, they saw, if others did not, most appalling indications of a speedy breaking away of all the barriers of restraint. Scarcely a week elapsed that he did not come home in a state little removed from drunken insensibility.

But there occurred, about this time, a change that filled the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield with a trembling hope. Henry became enamored of a beautiful young lady, whose character was lovely as her person; and, for her society, he forsook, almost entirely, the company of young men with whom he had led a gay life of pleasure and dissipation. He seemed, too, to have become aware of his danger, for it was evident that he drank far less freely than before. His face lost, to some extent, its florid appearance, and his complexion became clearer, and his countenance more elevated.

Agnes Loring, the young lady whose beauty had captivated Henry Greenfield, felt her breast warm with a sentiment kindred to that with which his own was inspired. She received his advances with favor, and when he offered his hand was prepared to accept it.

From the proposed union, the parents of Henry hoped much; and yet they looked forward to the new relation he was to assume with many misgivings of heart, and much fear and trembling.

CHAPTER V.

How like leaves in the eddying winds of autumn, were swept away, as by a sudden blast, the newly awakened hopes of Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield.

The parents of Agnes saw no barriers to the proposed union. The marriage was, therefore, celebrated at an early day after all the necessary preliminaries were settled. A large and brilliant wedding party graced the occasion. As usual among the wealthy and fashionable at such times, a liberal entertainment was prepared, and wines and liquors of various kinds were used as freely as water. It is hardly a matter of wonder, that Henry should have been tempted to drink liberally. At the supper-table, he was called upon to take a glass of wine so frequently by one and another, that, had he not been able to bear a good deal, he would never have found his way back to the drawing-rooms in any thing like a tolerable state of sobriety. One less fond of wine, would have merely sipped his glass with every new compliment; but Henry never failed draining it to the bottom.

When the company returned to the drawing-rooms, the young bridegroom showed himself to be in a remarkably good humor. He talked and laughed so loudly as to be heard by every one; and said many things that sounded to other ears than those of his parents exceedingly foolish. Grave old ladies bent their heads together, and then looked towards him curiously; while the younger and less thoughtful laughed aloud at his merry sayings and doings. With what a sudden and painful shock did this come upon the feelings of Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield, who had built so hopefully upon the foundation of this marriage. To see their son more than half intoxicated on his wedding night, was a terrible mortification; but they felt a deeper anguish than this mortification occasioned. The hope they had so fondly cherished was gone. If the occasion and the company did not prove strong enough to withhold his appetite from indulgence, what was to restrain him in the future?

While they felt and thought thus, two or three young men withdrew him from the room. Nearly half an hour afterwards, as Mrs. Greenfield sat in conversation with the young bride and her mother, a rude shout startled them, and turning their eyes in the direction from whence it came, they saw Henry dancing into the room, and acting more like a madman than a person in his senses. Everything was thrown into instant confusion. Young ladies screamed as he approached them; while elderly matrons knit their brows severely. Mr. Greenfield went quickly to his side, and taking hold of him, said—

"Henry! Henry! You are forgetting yourself."

"Forgetting myself!" responded the young man, half inarticulately. "Ho! ho! That is excellent! Why, is n't this my wedding-night? Aint I just married? Where 's Aggy, the darling!"

And he made an effort to pass by his father; but the latter grasped his arm tightly, and spoke to him in a low, stern voice. At this moment, the frightened bride arose from her place beside Mrs. Geenfield, and glided from the room.

"There! There she goes!" cried the young man, attempting to follow her. "Aggy! Aggy!"

A scene of painful disorder followed. Two or three men removed Henry from the room, and took him away to the bridal chamber, where he passed the night alone. Soon after he retired, the company broke up.

When the next day dawned upon the young man, and memory vividly recalled much that had transpired during the preceding night, his mortification and shame were intense. Mr. Greenfield came early to see the parents of Agnes, and to place the conduct of his son in the most favorable light, and he succeeded in removing, to a great extent, the unhappy feelings it had occasioned—but not from his own mind.

Mr. Greenfield made this the occasion of a long interview with his son, in which he represented, in a most vivid manner, the imminent danger he was in, and by every possible appeal and consideration, sought to induce him to abandon entirely the use of stimulating drinks. No—not by *every* possible consideration. There was one, and the strongest, that he wished to, but could not, urge; for to do so, involved a confession of his own weakness, and he was not yet prepared for that.

It was an easy matter to satisfy the mind of the young bride, and make her feel that the lapse from sobriety on the part of Henry was not a very serious affair. In a few days the light shadow it had thrown upon her feelings, passed off, and her heart was again in the sunshine. A number of parties were given, but, previous to each, Mr. Greenfield warned his son against the folly of his wedding night, and thus kept him so much upon his guard, that he did not again drink to such an excess, although he partook so freely as to make the effect visible to the eyes of his father and mother, and cause each festive occasion to

be one of grief instead of joy to them. They went with fear and trembling, and passed the evenings in anxiety and oppression of feeling.

"Oh! This is dreadful! Dreadful!" said Mrs. Greenfield, on retiring from the last party, at which Henry had indulged himself with a freedom that made his condition apparent to almost every one. "I hoped that this would have saved him; but my heart now despairs."

"Nothing will save him," replied Mr. Greenfield, speaking from a despondent feeling.

"Do n't say that. We must not give him up," returned the mother, quickly. "He is young."

"So young, and yet so lost to shame—so powerless in the hands of a vicious appetite. Ah me! If he could only be made fully sensible of his danger! If he could understand why he, above others, should be most on his guard!"

This was the nearest allusion yet made by Mr. Greenfield to the subject which had pressed upon his mind, with its weight of trouble, for years. Mrs. Greenfield did not answer, but her heart moved in response. A silence followed, which the former at length broke by saying, in a low, meek voice—

"There is one thing, of which I have never spoken, that has long oppressed my feelings."

Mrs. Greenfield listened, but made no remark.

"Do you remember what Mr. Heartwell said about hereditary transmission?"

"Yes."

"I believe that every word he uttered was true."

"I have often thought of it," said Mrs. Greenfield. "There was force in his arguments."

"And a self-evident force in the position assumed, unsustained by a single argument. It is not a body that we give to our children, but a soul, which forms to itself, from the elements of nature, a body to dwell in. This soul, or life, derived from us, must have the qualities of our life, be they good or evil. If we have evil, gross, or merely sensual affections, such affections will we give to our children. Can it be otherwise? Does an evil tree produce good fruit? or a bitter fountain send forth sweet water? No—this would be in opposition to nature's most apparent laws. If then, a man habituates himself, as

I did for years, to drink large quantities of wine and brandy, until the desire became so strong that it was almost impossible to resist it, will he not curse his children with an inclination to the same kind of indulgence? He will! Does the assertion need proof? Look at our boy! Is it not plain that something more than a mere acquired taste impels him to indulge the pleasures of drinking? He is too young to be enslaved as he is, were there not in him a hereditary weakness. Ah! How this thought has haunted me like a reproving spectre ever since the truth came flashing upon my mind!"

Mrs. Greenfield bowed her head and listened. Her husband, even though he had spoken these bitter things against himself, half hoped for disbelief on the part of his wife. He wished her to think of him with less of a condemnatory spirit than he indulged towards himself. But she remained silent. Not a word had been spoken that she did not fully believe. Seeing that she had nothing to answer, Mr. Greenfield continued.

"It is this that makes me so hopeless. If the love of intoxicating drinks were merely an acquired habit with him, it might be broken as I have broken the same habit, though indulged for more than thirty years. But in his case, the evil lies much deeper. A natural inclination, of which he knows nothing, is even stronger than habit, and lures him on to indulgence. If I could only tell him this! But I cannot—no, I cannot!"

Mrs. Greenfield listened but did not answer. What could she say? For weeks afterwards she debated, in her own mind, the question whether she ought not to tell her son the real ground of his danger, and thus seek to save him; but every time she resolved to do so, a natural repugnance to exposing to her child, his father's weakness and error, became so strong, that her mind fell back again into indecision.

A few months after the marriage of Henry Greenfield, both his own and wife's desire to have an establishment was gratified. An elegant house was bought by Mr. Loring, and handsomely furnished, as a present for his daughter. Into this the young couple were installed. An interest in his father's business, gave Henry the command of money in his own right, and he was, therefore, free to use it as his inclinations might direct. Among his first acts, was to stock his cellar with a choice variety of old liquors, selected for him by a wine merchant whose taste in such

matters were considered faultless. Wine and brandy he made as indispensable to the dinner table, as bread; and he commenced using them very much after the fashion pursued by his father in earlier times. His dining hour was four o'clock; and as he made it a rule not to go back to the store after dinner, he had leisure to sleep off the effects of any over indulgence he might fall into.

But, Henry varied from the old habit of his father in one thing. With Mr. Greenfield the indulgence of the dinner hour sufficed to a great extent; but it was not so with his son, whose mind was far from being as well balanced. The latter drank on his way to the counting-room in the morning, and repeated this at least two or three times during the hours of business; so that it often happened on his going home at four o'clock, that his mind was very much unbalanced.

The occurrence of the wedding night, notwithstanding it had been treated lightly by the friends of the young bride, made its impression on her mind. Her first feeling was one of mortification. But that quickly, and almost entirely, wore off. It was succeeded by a tender concern, as she saw her husband's fondness for wine; and this gave place to something like anxiety, when, after they had commenced housekeeping, she observed the effects of his daily indulgence at the table. Against this she ventured a gentle remonstrance. His reply sent her to her chamber in tears. How long she wept alone, he did not know, for he had not calculated the effect of his words, and was ignorant of the force with which they had fallen upon her heart.

There had never been the semblance of unkindness on the part of the young husband before. But, his wife ventured, unknowingly, upon forbidden ground. There was one affection of his mind, stronger than even the love of his bride—and that was a perverted affection, derived from his father, and making, as it were, a part of his very life. So long as this was unchecked in its course, no ripple appeared on the surface of his feelings. But, the moment it was opposed, the even flow of his temper was disturbed, and he exhibited himself in a new light to the sincere, gentle, loving creature he had taken into his bosom.

Tremblingly she shrunk from him; and when she came next into his presence, there was a timidity in her half down-cast

eyes, that only passed away when he spoke to her in his usual affectionate tone.

It was the first and last time Mrs. Greenfield ventured a word in opposition to her husband's too free indulgence in the pleasures of drinking. But, from the moment a fear of consequences stole into her heart, no persuasion could induce her to join him in a glass of wine at the table, as she had done in the beginning. He, therefore, drank alone.

Thus it went on, the debasing passion growing stronger and stronger, until its indulgence often exceeded the bounds of all propriety; and sent its slave reeling to his home in broad daylight.

"Sad, sad, was the lot of the young, beautiful, accomplished and loving wife. Henry Greenfield possessed his share of excellent qualities, and they had won and still claimed her affectionate regard. Her love was true and tender, and this made the pain she suffered the more severe. For his honest spirit; for his unselfish regard for the good of others; for his many good and generous qualities, she honored, admired and loved him. But, alas! how was all clouded by the one over-mastering passion! How did the fine gold become dim! How, over all that was beautiful, fell a dark, distorting shadow!

In the lapse of time, a babe came, with its blessing of innocence, to the dwelling of Henry Greenfield. The love of offspring was, with him, as with his father, a strong feeling; and when the child was laid in his arms, he experienced a thrill of pleasure as exquisite as strong. Even if her own heart had not been filled to joyfulness with a new love, the sight of her husband, as he bent over the dear pledge of affection, would have amply repaid the mother for all she had endured in giving to the world a new being.

Time went on, and the babe grew into the heart of its father; but in one thing, the mother was disappointed; he was not won from his sensual indulgence. Another innocent came ere the first had reached its second summer; and still another followed.

But for the weakness under which Henry Greenfield labored, his would have been one of the happiest of homes. He loved fervently, the gentle being who moved by his side; and scarcely less than worshipped the sweet children she had brought him.

By the time his oldest boy, a most lovely child, reached his

fourth year, Henry Greenfield had become so much enslaved, that even he took the alarm, and made some ineffectual efforts to break away from the bondage in which he was held. But he was not as a strong man tied with light flaxen cords; but as a child bound with ropes. He felt, for a time, the struggle to be in vain. As it usually happens, when any long indulged propensity receives a sudden check, that it runs riot as soon as free, the effort to restrain himself was followed by a deeper indulgence. And this was continued until shame aroused him again into a resistance that proved as ineffectual as the first.

Not understanding, that only in a total abandonment of every species of intoxicating drinks, was there the least chance of safety, Greenfield sought to reform his habit of indulgence by placing certain restrictions on his appetite. But he might as well have tried to hold a wild bird from its forest home with a web of gossamer. To taste was to fall. There was for him no nicely balanced equilibrium between sobriety and drunkenness. The most he could do, was to curb his appetite during the business portion of the day; and, for this restraint, it claimed a freer indulgence when he retired from the eye of public observation into his home.

CHAPTER VI.

What sadder spectacle is there than that of a man, in the very prime of life, fitted in every way for usefulness, and surrounded by all that can make life pleasant, falling beneath the paralyzing touch of the monster intemperance, and dragging those who love him, down into the deep places of wretchedness? Such a spectacle was presented by Henry Greenfield, when he entered his thirty-third year. And so changed had he become, that he would not permit his father or mother to make the slightest allusion to his evil habit without an angry retort; thus cutting off all the hopes they had cherished of one day being able to show him his folly in such a light as to win him from his evil way.

As for his wife, from the day her first word of remonstrance was thrown back upon her, she had never ventured upon the experiment of a second. From every one, she carefully concealed

the extent of his fall from sobriety; and even when questioned by her own mother, evaded all direct answers. But, so rapidly did he begin to move in his downward way, that her long-suffering spirit was aroused into a wild alarm, under the influence of which she called one day to see the elder Mrs. Greenfield, and unburdened, for the first time, her troubled feelings. The mother heard her weeping. But she had no healing balm for her wounded heart; no hopeful words for her drooping spirit. She had nothing to give but tears.

After Anges went away, Mrs. Greenfield held a long conference with her husband. But no light dawned upon them. On the next day, Henry took his two oldest boys, of whom he continued to be exceedingly fond, to an exhibition especially designed for children. After leaving the exhibition room, he brought them into the store, which was not far off, to see their grandfather. Two lovelier children are not often seen; nor were any more tenderly beloved than they. Their father brought them into a little retired office, especially assigned to the use of the elder Mr. Greenfield. After they had been caressed, and had related the curious and wonderful things they had seen, they ran out to talk with the young men in the store, and the father and son were left alone.

"Dear little creatures!" said the elder Mr. Geenfield, after a pause.

Henry, who was entirely sober, affirmed the sentiment. There was another brief pause, and the elder Mr. Greenfield said—

"But my heart aches, whenever I see them."

His son looked surprised.

"Yes, Henry, it *aches*. Sit down, and I will tell you why."

The young man hesitated. He felt that another remonstrance was coming, and he wished nothing said on the old subject.

"Sit down, my son," said the old gentleman; I wish to tell you a secret that I ought long since to have divulged. But, shame has kept me silent."

Henry sat down, and looked wonderingly into the face of his father.

"I need not ask you whether you love your children," began Mr. Greenfield. "I know that they are exceedingly dear to you I know that you would do almost any thing to secure their good. And yet, Henry, you have cursed them with a direful curse."

"Me? Father! Are you beside yourself!"

"No, my son! I speak but the words of truth and soberness. Listen to me, and I will unburden my heart of something that has been on it for years. I should have told you long ago. Will you promise, now, to hear me patiently?"

"Surely, I can do no less," replied the son, who was taken altogether by surprise at his father's strange words.

Every body says your little Henry bears to you a remarkable resemblance," said Mr. Greenfield.

"I know. And I can see in his disposition, already, traits resembling my own."

"Why is this?"

"I am his father."

"And therefore, he is like you. Yes, that is the simple truth. You are aware of a habit you have of placing the fingers of your right hand against your temple, when musing?"

"I never thought about it. But I believe it is so."

"You are doing it now."

"So I am. I've observed that Henry occasionally does the same thing."

"True. Look at him now, listening to something one of the young men is saying."

"I see. His fingers are on his temple."

"Why is it?"

The young man looked thoughtful, but did not answer.

"You also have a slight twitching in one of your eyebrows."

"I know; and Henry has the same."

"He walks like you—he stands like you—in fact, he is your miniature image. Every one remarks this."

"True."

"Why is it?"

"I am his father."

"Yes. But you did not give him a body. Why, then, in body and in the actions of his body, does he resemble you in so remarkable a degree?"

The son again looked thoughtful.

"Is it not because he derives from you that spiritual form into which God breathes the breath of life, and which takes to itself a material body whereby to act in the visible world of nature? And if this be so, will not the form you give possess all the qual-

ties and characteristics of its progenitors; and, in clothing itself in a material substance, so do it as to represent those qualities and distinguishing features?"

"That seems to be the explanation."

"Depend upon it, Henry, it is the true one. Every father thus transmits to his offspring the qualities of his own mind, and these manifest themselves in a body with a peculiar and corresponding form. This is the reason why a child resembles, in body, his parents. If in the body, then, there be a resemblance, how much more so in the mind or soul, that forms the body? Do you comprehend what I say?"

"Clearly."

"Very well. You can then see, as a practical and real something—not as a vague theory—the doctrine that children inherit the mental qualities of their parents; be they good or evil?"

"Oh, certainly. I never doubted that this was so: although I have never had occasion to think much about it."

"You can then clearly understand, that the greatest blessing parents can bestow upon their children is a legacy of good affections?"

"Explain what you mean by this in other words."

"If our children inherit the tendencies to good or evil that rule in our mind—if our habits descend to them as heir-looms—how all-important is it that we should, for their sakes, cultivate good affections, and reform all evil habits! For, if we do not do so, our children that are born while we indulge in such evils, will inevitably be cursed with an inclination for the same things."

"What a doctrine!" exclaimed the young man, as he drew a long quivering breath.

"Yet as true as that the sun shines in heaven," said Mr. Greenfield, solemnly.

"I cannot doubt it," was the musing, serious reply.

"And now, Henry," said the father, and his voice was slightly agitated; "let me bring this home to your mind and heart by evidences of a most painful and heart-aching character. You are my son, and as such have been cursed by your father."

"Do not say so!" interrupted the young man, in a deprecating voice.

"Listen!" continued his father, "and let every word I say be well considered. For many years before you were born, I in-

dulged a love for stimulating liquors, until it grew to such a habit that it became my chief pleasure. You have, yourself, seen how freely I used wine and brandy every day; but, you did not know that, for years, I left the dinner-table so near to intoxication, that I would have staggered in the street. But it was even so. Is it any wonder, then, that I cursed you with an inclination to the very evil that I had indulged? But, I did not understand how sad an inheritance I had left my child, until it was too late to guard him from the approach of exciting causes. My own hand placed temptation before him. I not only bequeathed a natural inclination to indulge in drinking to excess; but I kindled the fiery desire in his bosom ere reason came, with its calm dictation, to restrain him. I cannot wonder, that he fell! I cannot wonder that his appetite had more influence over him than the tears and entreaties of his parents and friends. God help him! for there is no power on earth that is strong enough to save!"

The very agitation felt by Mr. Greenfield, closed for a time his utterance. His son made no reply, but sat fixed as a statue, with his eyes upon the floor. In a few minutes Mr. Greenfield resumed, but in a lower and calmer, yet exceedingly earnest voice.

"Henry! If the curse had been permitted to die with you; if the sin of the father had not descended to the third generation——"

"Father!" exclaimed the young man, in an agitated voice. The tone was that of one who had been struck with a sudden pain.

"If," went on Mr. Greenfield, "you had not fallen into the same dreadful evil, and entailed upon your children the same dreadful curse——"

"Oh, father! Say no more! Say no more!" ejaculated Henry, in a voice of agony, rising as he spoke. "Your words almost madden me."

And with this he turned off abruptly, and going into the store, took his children by the hand and led them away.

"Father," said little Henry, taking hold of a wine-glass that stood by his plate, a few minutes after the family of the younger Mr. Greenfield assembled around the dinner-table on that day—"father, can't John fill my glass now?"

The custom had been to let Henry have a glass of light wine with his dessert. But the child's taste had been already morbidly

excited, and he craved the stimulating draught even before the usual time.

The words of old Mr. Greenfield had been, as it were, burning themselves into the mind of his son since the moment of their utterance. He had tried to disbelieve them; but that was a vain effort. He felt that all was but too true; and that he had, in his hand, the key which unlocked the mystery of his own insatiable thirst. Nothing had been decided in his mind up to the moment when the request of his child came with a startling corroboration of all he had heard.

"Say, father! Can't John fill my glass now?" came again, ere he had found time to reply, in fitting words, to the first request.

"No, my dear," he answered, with forced composure of voice. Then turning to the waiter, he said—

"John, you may remove the wine and brandy to the sideboard."

The waiter obeyed; but merely placed the decanters on the sideboard."

"Lock them up," said Mr. Greenfield.

"Can't I have some wine?" asked, again, the little boy, looking really distressed at the prospect of losing his accustomed glass.

"No, my dear. It is not good for you, replied his father, kindly.

"But you drink it, father. Is n't it good for you?"

"No, dear," replied Mr. Greenfield, after a slight pause. "It is not good for either of us, and we won't drink any more of it."

Mrs. Greenfield looked up surprised. But her husband avoided her eyes. What a light went over her face.

The child seemed but half satisfied. When the dessert came, he would eat a little, and then finger his glass, with the air of one who, for want of something, could not enjoy the good things spread before him, and this was continued until the meal was finished. On leaving the table, his fruit and pastry were but half eaten.

All this his father observed, and with deeply painful emotions. He saw that the perverted appetite which he had received from his father, was entailed upon his own child, and with an increased susceptibility of excitement.

"How shall I save him?" came almost aloud from his lips, as he closed the door of his chamber after him, and threw himself upon his bed—not to sleep, as usual, but to think—perfectly sober after leaving the dinner-table, and for the first time in many years.

We cannot follow the unhappy man through the long and anxious period that elapsed from the day of his reform—he never placed the cup of confusion again to his lips—until his children entered the world as men, subject to all its thousand temptations. Enough for the practical bearing of our story to say, that, after fully explaining to his wife the nature and extent of the danger with which their offspring was surrounded, he united with her in an unwearied guardianship over them, that made the removal of stimulating drinks from their sight and taste, ever a thing of primary importance. Yet, with all this, he knew, too well, that they must ever be in danger. That for them to touch, taste or handle, was to put their souls in jeopardy. Sometimes, in moments of a more vivid realization of the peril that surrounded them, he wished that they had died as infants. But, after years brought his reward; and he saw his sons enter the world temperate from principle. He did not, however, let them go forth, as men, without giving them, in order to make assurance doubly sure, the history of himself and father which we have related; and enjoining them to guard their offspring as he had guarded them.

"For," said he, "intemperance is a sin that is visited upon the children even unto the third and fourth generation."

And, let the writer add, so is every other indulged, and thereby confirmed, evil principle of the mind. If we would save our children from the vice of intemperance, let us be temperate ourselves, and thus give them healthy moral as well as physical constitutions. If we would save them from theft, let us be honest in all our dealings with our fellow-men—not honest merely in a legal sense, but honest in our very intentions. If we would not have our children tempted to commit murder while in the heat of passion, let us beware how we indulge a feeling of hatred towards others; for, we give to our children the forms of the very affections by which we are ruled. If we are honest, virtuous, chaste, and temperate, our children will be born with honest, virtuous, chaste and temperate inclinations; but, if we

wrong our neighbors—if we are covetous—if we are impure—if we indulge in the evil of intemperance, or in any other evil, our children will be impelled by the very nature they inherited from us to do the same things. This is no idle fiction—no cunningly devised fable—but a most solemn and important truth.

Men labor diligently to lay up this world's goods with which to bless their children; but who thinks of denying himself the gratification of his evil lusts and passions in order to bless them in a higher, truer and more real sense.

But enough. If what is already written fail to impress the mind of the reader, further argument would be useless. And so we cast this seed into the minds of the people, believing it to be good seed, and trusting that a portion will fall into good ground. If no tidings of the harvest ever reach us, we will yet believe that the seed has taken root somewhere and yielded its proper fruit.

TEMPTATIONS: A STORY FOR THE REFORMED.

CHAPTER I.

A WOMAN pale from recent sickness, and wasted by long suffering, want and wearying toil, sat bending close to a dim light, and straining her eyes, half blinded by pain, over work that must be finished that night, or there would be hunger at the hearts of her children on the next day. Three little ones, for whom, in sorrow and in tears, she took up, daily, her heavy burdens, and tottered along under them, lay sleeping on the floor, with only a coarse quilt between them and the hard boards. Around her, all looked comfortless. The room was in disorder, either from neglect or lack of time to see after its proper arrangement; and there was, in the person of the woman herself, an air of slovenliness and extreme poverty, that indicated the loss of all interest in even the common affairs of life.

No sigh struggled up from the unhappy woman's bosom; no groan, wrung by pain from a drooping spirit, came through her colorless lips; there was no pause in her labor to muse or to listen. No—for the hope of change had passed from her heart. There was nothing left but to suffer on and toil on until the end came.

While she sat thus at her work the door of the room where she was, opened, and a man, covered with the sad evidences of years of debasing drunkenness, came in. The woman needed not to turn her eyes upon him. His step was familiar to her ear. She knew it was her besotted, degraded, unfeeling husband. For years she had lived in the anxious hope, that he would see his folly and pause in his downward course to ruin. But that hope had long since left her. She never looked, now, to his coming home with the trembling interest that once agitated her bosom. She

knew he would return bereft of human reason and human sympathy, and that he would bring nothing to supply the wants of either herself or her suffering children.

Without even looking around, or by any sign indicating her sense of his presence, the woman continued to sew on. The man, after closing the door, stood for some moments, looking first at his wife, and then at the children who lay sleeping upon the floor. Miserable as was his attire, and marred his countenance, he appeared to be in his right mind; and as he surveyed the scene around him, his face became sorrowful, and he uttered a deep sigh.

How suddenly did the wife start and turn, as that evidence of feeling struck upon her ear. One glance caused her heart to bound, and then to flutter in her bosom with a newly awakened hope. Her husband, who had been away since dinner-time, had come home sober. Strange event! Such an occurrence had not taken place for a long, long time. Though he could not supply his family with food and clothing, he had, yet, ever been able to meet the demands of his craving appetite. Though the bread was cut off, the fiery stream of ruin had not been stayed.

But, he was sober once more. The work fell from the hands of his wife, and, unable either to speak or to rise, she sat looking anxiously up into his face, her own countenance expressing surprise, hope, and eager expectation. For some moments the two, who had regarded each other for a long time with indifference, now exchanged glances of intense interest. But the silence and suspense were quickly broken.

"Margaret," said the man, in a low, trembling, yet earnest voice, coming up close to her as he spoke, "I have this night signed the pledge. They told me, if I would do so, I could reform. That it was my only hope. And I have done it."

"Oh William!"

The wife gave voice to no other words; but the tone in which these were said, contained a volume of meaning.

There was no enthusiasm—no impulsive expressions of joy on either side. Both felt too serious; and both stood too near the yielding margin, and in full view of the dark and rapid river that, but a moment before, was bearing them on to swift destruction, to have any heart for a joyful utterance.

With a subdued and serious air, the man, after announcing in the few words we have given, the important step he had ventured to take, came, and sat down close by his wife, whose work still lay upon the floor where it had dropped from her hand. She felt bewildered; and was questioning herself whether all were not a delusive dream. For such a change, she had not trusted herself to hope. In fact, as is just said, hope of a change in her husband's ways, was no longer a visitant in her bosom. So passive —so expressionless was the poor woman, that her husband began to feel a little disappointed.

"You do not seem glad, Margaret," said he, in a half complaining voice.

This aroused her.

"Glad?" she returned. "Glad! Oh, William! But I cannot realize it. You have signed the pledge?"

"Yes. And by the help of God, I will keep it. Never—never again shall the poison that has burned so long through my veins, and taken away reason and all strength to keep good resolutions pass my lips. Forever have I renounced the accursed thing!"

"Forever! Oh! Thanks to God!" fell, murmured, yet with an intensely fervent expression from the lips of the wife, as she leaned over, and hid her face upon the arm of her husband.

When the whole truth presented itself, and without disguise, to the mind of that suffering woman, enough of doubt came to blend with her happiness an alloy of fear, and to check the words of congratulation that trembled on her lips. Would her husband be able to keep his pledge? How instinctively did that question force itself upon her! Too many instances of men having violated their pledges, had come to her knowledge, and she had seen that the last state of such men was worse than the first. Alas! even in an hour when there was so much cause for joy and thankfulness, doubt and fear came obtrusively in. That such was her state of mind, came into the perception of her thoughts, and she made an effort to rise above it; and in the effort, she spoke in words and tones of encouragement to her husband.

"Oh!" she said, as she lifted her face, and looked up with overflowing eyes, "Oh William! We may yet be happy! It is never too late to repent and lead a good life. God will strengthen

you. He will enable you to keep your pledge. He will send light, warmth and comfort once more into our household."

"He will, Margaret, he will. Oh! What a wretch I have been!"

"Let us forget the past. A pleasant way lies before us, if we will only walk in it."

As the wife said this, she stooped and lifting her work from the floor, turned towards her poor light, remarking as she did so, in a cheerful voice—

"But it is getting late, and this must be finished before I can go to bed."

"Oh no, not to-night, Margaret. It is already past ten o'clock, and you look worn out as it is," replied her husband, laying his hand upon her arm.

With kind words and tones like these to sustain her, the toiling wife could have worked through the whole night, and not felt a sense of weariness. They came upon her spirit as dew upon the mown grass, or showers to the parched and thirsty ground.

"I do not feel tired now," she answered, smiling. "In an hour, I can easily finish this garment. And it must be done to-night."

"In an hour! And why to-night, Margaret?"

The wife smiled, with a kind and cheerful expression, as she replied—

"I must have the money for it to-morrow morning."

"Why?"

"We are out of every thing. The children would have nothing to eat."

A shadow flitted over the disfigured face of the husband. But he instantly thrust a hand into his pockets, and, after searching through them, brought forth several small coins; their aggregate value was about forty cents.

"Here, Margaret. These will buy bread for to-morrow," said he. "Put up your work."

And he laid the money upon the table near which she sat.

The fingers that, but a moment before, held the bright needle so firmly, were now relaxed; the heart, so strong in its purpose, failed; and the body, which necessity had nerved to further endurance, became feeble almost as the body of a child. Help had come almost unexpectedly. The first fruits of the pledge

were before her. A hand was upon the heavy burden that had pressed her to the earth, and while she felt it lightening, she also felt that she had no real strength to bear even a smaller weight, and wondered that she had been able to hold out so long. She made no reply to her husband as she laid aside the garment upon which she had been sewing, but he read in her face more than words could have expressed.

"Margaret," said the repentant husband, "you shall work beyond your strength no longer. I can made good wages, and the whole of what I earn will I place in your hands. Take comfort. Better days are coming."

Will any one be surprised to hear, that words of encouragement like these, coming so unexpectedly, and uttered in tender accents by lips from which only angry and brutal expressions had fallen for months—it might be years—so broke down the feelings of that poor wife, that her tears could no longer be restrained, but gushed forth freely? Though she covered her face with her hands and wept and sobbed, like one in a paroxysm of grief, he who looked upon her in her excitement, knew that joy and thankfulness had awakened this strong emotion.

Calmness of mind soon came to both. Then they talked of the future, and spoke to each other many words of comfort and encouragement. Thus the hours were employed until after midnight, when a sleep more peaceful than either had for a long time known, closed gently their weary eyelids.

CHAPTER II.

William Edgar, a history of whose trials and temptations as a reformed man we are about to write, had been, as the reader naturally infers, a most degraded and besotted drunkard. At a right moment he was approached by a friend of temperance, and prevailed upon to sign the pledge. He was assured that, only in such an act, was there the smallest hope for him; that unless he pledged himself, under his sign manual, to abandon the use of all stimulating drinks, he must go down, inevitably, to a drunkard's grave. Any attempt at reformation on the mere strength

of a good resolution, or oral pledge to himself, he knew to be useless, for he had tried it too often. He had lost all rational control over himself. There was no longer any power in reason to restrain the giant appetite that had grown up within him. He was a free man no more. What was told to him of the pledge, therefore, confirmed as it was by a long array of evidence and example, he fully believed, and in the confidence of this state, signed it. Nothing was said of the temptations that were to follow; of the fierce struggles that would come when the manacled giant, gathering up his strength, made terrible efforts to regain his liberty. It would have done no good to have warned him, at the time, of this—it might have done harm by inducing discouragement. To one who had fallen so low, and who, when first lifted upon his feet, stood tottering, as it were, hope and confidence were most needed, and these were given. The pledge Edgar believed to be, after he had signed it, a wall of adamant around him, through which no enemy to his peace could break.

And so, under the blessing of Heaven, it was, in his first state. God made it the means to him and to every other reformed man, of elevation from moral slavery, and held him up by it, until able, once more, as a man created in His image and likeness, to stand in the strength of rational self-control. But it was only a substitute, coming with external restraints to one in whom no principle of religion could yet be formed; and its use was to hold him free from the soul-destroying vice so long indulged, until internal bonds could be formed. These once laid around his soul, he would be free indeed. The evil of drinking would be shunned as a sin against God, and not as the violation of a solemn pledge entered into between man and man. When this state came, the danger of falling in any temptation, no matter how severe, would be far removed.

Into the freedom here described, it is the effort of Divine Providence to bring every man; because no man can be spiritually elevated, or, in other words, regenerated, who is not in freedom to choose between good and evil; this he cannot be, when he feels himself to be under external bonds. Reformation of the life, and a regeneration of the internal principles or ends of life, are two things. The reformation of the drunkard can only be obtained by means of the pledge; but his regeneration as a man is effected independently of it, so to speak, and lifts him entirely

above its sphere of influence. He then becomes a truly temperate man; not because he is pledged to abstain from intoxicating drink, but because drunkenness is a sin against God. He knows that if he tastes the cup of confusion, he must inevitably fall; and he, therefore, shuns it as an evil that would drag him down to perdition.

Thus much to make our story of William Edgar, the reformed man, intelligible. Thousands, like him, have signed the pledge, and in the confident hope that it would prove all sufficient to hold in chains the feverish and struggling appetite within them, have gone on, self-confident and glorying in their new-found strength for a few months, or, it may be, for a few years, but, alas! in a moment of weakness, or, in a time of severer trial, they have fallen, and, too many of them, hopelessly. No internal principle, no religious basis, had been formed in their minds, to hold all in genuine integrity, and the external bond, weakened or overstrained, was snapped in sunder.

In giving the history of William Edgar, our object is to make the reformed man sensible of his true relation to the pledge, in order that he may plant his feet more securely, and stand firmer than he has yet stood. No good and true principle is confirmed in any man except through temptation firmly withstood, and overcome in strength received and acknowledged as from God. It is for this reason that every reformed man is tempted, but never beyond what he can bear, if he will strive in a right spirit for the mastery. Mere abstinence from intoxicating drinks does not make a man internally a better man, but, it puts him in freedom to become better, and if he does not rightly use this freedom, he is ever in imminent danger of falling away and becoming worse than he was before. This is a solemn truth, and it is full time that it was clearly and broadly enunciated. The work of reformation is but begun when a man signs the pledge; his elevation into freedom will be as slow, and, it may be, slower than was his declension, and to give all the aid in our power to help on this process of elevation, is the duty of every one who is called to labor in the cause of temperance.

On the morning of the day after William Edgar had signed the pledge, he went, sober, to the shop where he worked as a journeyman. The change in him was so marked, that all noticed it.

"Hallo! What's the matter with Edgar," said one as he came in. He had so degraded himself in the eyes of his fellow workmen, that no sentiment of respect for him was entertained by any in the shop.

The remark drew all eyes upon him.

"Sober, as I live!" exclaimed another. "What's in the wind? Is the world coming to an end?"

"He's joined the Millerites, and expects to go up next week," said a third.

At this there was a general laugh through the shop. Edgar felt the railing. Sobriety, and an earnest desire to rise above the degraded condition into which he had fallen, restored some of the lost feelings of the man. The new life he had entered upon, involved so many serious considerations, and was so full of important results both to himself and others, that he felt in no mood for levity. One of the journeymen, noticing his serious air, and half guessing at the cause, said, as the laugh died away—

"O no. It is not the Millerites who have got him, but the Temperanceites."

"What! Bill Edgar joined the tetotallers? I'll never believe that."

"Is n't it so, Bill?" said the other. "Speak out! Don't be ashamed of it. If you have signed the pledge, here's my hand, and I wish you joy. May you never break it!"

The journeyman extended his hand, and Edgar seized it in token of assent.

"Is it indeed so!" fell from the lips of other of his fellow workmen, as they gathered around him, and in tones of approval, pleasure and congratulation, exclaimed, "Who would have believed it?"

The moment the truth was known, the bearing of every one changed towards the man they had been in the habit of treating as one who had lost all claims to respect, and as destitute of human feelings. In his efforts to elevate himself, they were ready to lend him a hand, and to encourage him to stand fast in the good resolution he had taken.

All this was pleasant to Edgar, and helped to sustain him. Self-respect came back, and this strengthened the good purposes of his mind, and made his resolutions stronger. He felt like a free man; and above all danger of again falling into the dreadful

vice from the slavery of which he had just broken. To work, had never seemed so pleasant. The hours, that before had dragged heavily on, now passed swiftly, and the time for returning home came ere the day seemed more than half over.

Edgar understood the earnest, almost fearful glance thrown upon him by his wife as he entered his humble abode ; and he also understood why her countenance brightened up instantly. Her face was thin and pale, but her smile was pleasant and the tones of her voice, when she spoke, were cheerful as of old.

Days passed, and still Edgar remained true to his pledge. He met with encouragement from almost every one. Men who had treated him as they would a mere animal, devoid of all feeling, now spoke to him as if he were a rational being, and congratulated him upon the new era that had opened upon his life. At home, the appearance of every thing began to change. Little articles of comfort, one after another, were introduced ; wife and children appeared in better attire, and a plentiful supply of wholesome food at all times crowned their table.

But, it must not be supposed that, even during the period of these first, inspiring changes, the reformed man was entirely free from temptations. His lot, had that been the case, would have been more than mortal ; or, the mere signing of the pledge would have produced an internal change instead of being the first great step in that important work. No, he was not free from temptations ; but they were light in comparison to those which were to come.

The ridicule of old companions in vice, fretted him sometimes ; and there were occasions, when their sneer at him for being a tetotaller, or a cold-water man, was excessively annoying. But he turned from them quickly and came into his own right mind again. But, what he had most to contend with, was a gradually returning desire for the old stimulus. As he became familiar with the changed aspect of things at home, the contrast between the present and the past was less distinctly presented, and, therefore, operated less and less as an incentive to persevere in his new course of life. A little reflection always recalled this contrast ; but it was the fact that it required reflection to recall it, which rendered it no longer a constantly operating incentive.

It was now that he began to be aware of the fact, that even total abstinence had not destroyed the old appetite ; for there were

times when it would suddenly be awakened, and call for indulgence. He did not, for a moment, feel like yielding to its demands; but the fact that it still existed, when made clear to his mind, brought a feeling of discouragement, accompanied by a chilling fear, lest, in some unguarded time, the old desire should be too strong for him. Beyond the pledge, he saw no aid which he could call in. That he had looked upon as the all-important remedy for the disease of drunkenness. It had been applied, in his own case, with wonderful success. But, alas! a predisposition to the disease still remained in his system, ready to take advantage of every exciting cause. Of this it took only a few months to make him painfully conscious.

CHAPTER III.

For six months William Edgar had been true to his pledge; and hundreds of pleasing evidences of the fact were to be seen at home and in his own person. Yet, as intimated, he had not been entirely free from temptations, though they were comparatively light. What he most needed, was something to employ the time before spent in drinking houses and among "hale fellows well met." A taste for reading had never been formed in his mind, and he had therefore, no resource in books. The consequence was, that his evenings dragged heavily. Sometimes he would retire to bed early, and sometimes he would go out after supper and walk the streets, listlessly, for an hour. One or two evenings were spent in temperance meetings. These were passed more agreeably than any.

"Oh dear!" he said one evening, rising and stretching himself, "I wish I had something to do."

Mrs. Edgar looked up from her work, but did not smile; for evidences like this of an internally dissatisfied and restless state, had for some time exhibited themselves, and caused her uneasiness.

"I believe I'll take a walk," added the husband. "Though walking merely for walk's sake, is poor employment. If I had an errand out, or were going any where, it would be another thing."

"Suppose you read to me," said Mrs. Edgar.

"I do n't like to read aloud. It tickles my throat."

"Read to yourself then."

"Books do n't interest me. No, I 'll take a walk."

"You 'll be back soon?"

"Oh yes. I 'll only take a turn around two or three blocks."

And saying this, Edgar left the house with a feeling of dissatisfaction at his heart. He wanted some excitement—some recreation—something to break the dull monotony of his idle hours. There were old and pleasant companions, with whom to chat, or take a game of draughts or dominos would have been agreeable enough, and with whom the hours, now so heavy-footed, would have danced lightly away. But, he could not join them. They were where he dared not go; for to meet them, as of old, would be to run into danger—would be to court temptation.

"Edgar!" said a man, stopping before him, and putting a hand upon his shoulder, and by the word and act arousing him from a dream of former times, in which a false light gilded and made pleasant to contemplate scenes of revelry and gross self-indulgence, "Edgar my old fellow! how are you? Where have you been this half an age?"

The two men shook each other by the hand, heartily.

"I am really glad to meet you," said the friend. "Where in the world have you kept yourself for so long a time? And how well you look. You are like another man."

"And so I am," returned Edgar, with a feeling of pride. "I am a new man."

"Indeed! How?"

"I 've quit the old bad habit."

"Drinking?"

"Yes,"

"Indeed! Have *you* signed the pledge?"

"Yes, *I* have signed the pledge."

"Humph!" There was an equivocal expression in the sound of the man's voice. Evidently, no hearty and warm response arose in his mind at this intelligence.

"Well, you acted wisely, no doubt," he added, "for you were rather far gone. But have you signed off from every thing?"

"Yes, from every thing that can intoxicate."

"You would n't refuse to take a glass of wine for old acquaintance' sake?"

"My pledge covers every thing. Brandy, wine, beer or cider."

"A glass of wine, now and then, would n't hurt you."

"It would be my ruin. No—no. The cold water pledge is the only safe one to take. All others are useless."

"You know best, I suppose; but, come around to Bender's with me, and let us have a good long talk about matters and things. I am really glad to see you, and glad to find you are so much better off than when we last met. You will not refuse to take a glass of lemonade, or eat a plate of oysters with me."

The danger of going into a drinking house had often been urged upon Edgar by his new temperance friends. The very atmosphere of such a place was poison to the lungs of a reformed man, they said; and to the sound reasons they educed for this assertion, he gave a full assent. And yet he could not see how it was possible to refuse the present invitation. He was glad to meet this old friend, and as he held him by the hand, his heart warmed. To have an hour's talk with him, would be very pleasant. But he did not wish to accompany him to Bender's.

"I do n't care about anything to eat or drink," said he in reply. "Let us take a walk."

"If you do n't, I do. So, come along. After working hard all day, I want to sit down—not walk about."

But Edgar still hesitated. He had an interior consciousness that it would be wrong for him to accede to this request—that he would be exposed to danger.

"I would rather not go to Bender's," he said.

"Then come around to Ely's. It do n't matter to me."

"I would rather not go into any drinking house. I have pledged myself not only to abstain from all intoxicating liquors, but to discourage their use in others. It would be wrong, therefore, for me to be seen in a place where they are sold."

"That 's running away into extremes," said the man, with a slight air of displeasure. "But it 's the way with all you temperance men. The moment you take the pledge, you are like the fox who had lost his tail, and will never rest until you get everybody else in the same predicament."

The way in which this was said disturbed Edgar, and, destroyed, to some extent, the rational balance of his mind. He did not like the accusation, nor the sneering manner in which it was uttered. And his first impulse was to disprove it, so far as he was concerned, by yielding to his companion's wishes.

"Come along!" said the friend, breaking in upon this state of mind, "and do n't make a fool of yourself. If you are pledged not to drink anything, why do n't drink—there is no necessity for it. But you are surely not pledged to abstain from meeting an old acquaintance, and spending a social hour with him? So come along! Or, if you won't, why good evening. I can 't stay here any longer."

"Do n't get offended," returned Edgar in a deprecating voice, as he commenced moving along slowly in the direction his friend started to go.

"Oh no. I 'm not offended," was replied; "but then I like to see a man act like a man, and hold himself free to go where he pleases."

"He ought not to go, wantonly, into danger," said Edgar.

"No, certainly not. And if you think there is any danger in your going to Bender's, and chatting with me for an hour, do n't go. If you can 't bear the sight and smell of liquor, without wanting it, my advice to you is to keep out of danger. But I really thought, that when a man took the pledge he was free."

"And so he is," said Edgar. "I would not be afraid to meet any enticements to drink you might bring. No: it was not that. But—but—"

"But what?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing."

And the reformed man walked along by the side of his tempter, in the way to the drinking house where for years he had spent from two to three evenings in a week, and debased himself by intoxication, until scarcely a vestige of the likeness and image of his Maker remained. His mind was not fully made up to go in. That question was still in debate. Prudence, and a regard for the principles he had adopted, urged him not to enter a place where intoxicating drinks were poured out like water; while false shame, weak pride, and a latent desire to get among old associates, drew him along like a ship in a gently moving current. At last, they were at the tavern-door, and, without pause, the friend was passing in. Edgar stopped.

"Do n't be so weak and silly," said the former. "There is no great anaconda here to swallow you, nor hyena to suck your blood. What are you afraid of? If you have taken the pledge, that is enough. A man clad in iron may pass through the fire unharmed."

As a man who is about taking a fearful leap, closes his eyes that he may not see his danger; so did Edgar close the eyes of his mind to a perception of consequences, as, with a blind resolution, he stepped forward, and, in a moment more, was in the brilliantly lighted bar-room. This was a favorite drinking house, and nightly filled with idlers who came to lounge and sip their punch, or with a lower class, who were drawn thither by the unresisted appeals of a yearning appetite.

Edgar felt strange. He was never more clearly conscious of wrong in his life than he was at that moment. The atmosphere of the room oppressed him. But for very shame, he would have hastily retreated. But it was too late, he felt, for that now. His companion led the way to a table, and handing him a chair, they both sat down. The former remarking, after they were seated—

"Now this looks like old times. The fact is, Edgar, I can't see why a man who takes the pledge is bound to desert all his old friends, and give up every social enjoyment. I dare say you have moped at home or strolled about the streets as you were doing this evening, until you were half beside yourself, and ready to go to drinking again, from very necessity. This is wrong—all wrong. A temperance man should n't cease to be a social man. There are dozens of warm-hearted fellows that meet here every night, who would be glad of your company, and upon some of whom your presence would be a salutary check to too free indulgence. Here, Jake!" He addressed a waiter who was passing at the moment. "One apple toddy, and—what shall I say for you?" addressing Edgar.

"Oh! nothing—nothing. You forget."

"Yes—yes. You must have something. A glass of soda-water or lemonade. Which will you have."

"Lemonade will do, if I must drink with you."

"One apple-toddy and one lemonade, Jake."

"Yes sir."

By the time Edgar had taken his glass of lemonade he began to breathe freer, and to feel rather more at home. He looked around him upon each familiar object; and felt that it was, really, something of a privation to be debarred the privilege of spending an evening occasionally, in such a pleasant place and among old friends. Soon he was noticed by one and another of his former

acquaintances, who gathered around him, with many expressions of pleasure at seeing him once more, and looking so well.

"And is it really true, Bill," said one, "that the temperance folks have got you? I heard that they had you shut up in a sort of cold-water nunnery—or rather monastery."

"Not quite so bad as that," remarked the friend who had him in charge. "But it is true that Edgar here has signed the pledge and become a sober, decent man; and I give him credit for it. Still, he is not so exclusive in his feelings as to cut himself off from his old friends."

"He 'd better," muttered a red-faced man, who, with his glass of liquor in his hand, had come across the room to hear what the little group around Edgar was saying; and he turned away as he spoke. "He 'd better; for if he do n't cut himself off from one set of friends, he will from the other. No man can serve two masters. I 've tried that; but it won't do." And the man sat down in the place from which he had risen, and went on sipping his liquor.

"Signed off tetotally! Ha! ha!"

"If a man signs the pledge, that is no reason why he should desert his old friends."

"No, indeed."

"That 's why I hate all these temperance reformers. They won't let their followers speak civilly to any one who thinks proper to take his glass in moderation."

"Here 's Edgar; as clever a fellow as ever breathed. Have n't they made him turn his back upon all of us?"

And remarks like these ran round and round the circle that had gathered near Edgar. Some laughed at him boldly for signing off on every account.

"A glass of beer or wine never hurt any body," they said. "They were good things to be used in moderation. If some men would make beasts of themselves, that was theirs, and not the liquor's fault. This going on the other extreme was all a piece of folly and fanaticism."

Thus were assaults made upon the good resolutions and pledge of the reformed man, and, at every point, until he was strongly tempted to put the cup of confusion again to his lips, to prove that he was a free man, and not afraid to drink. But, happily, he was able to resist the temptation; though in far more danger

than he imagined. Two hours he spent among his old companions, and then dragged himself away and returned home to his anxious and alarmed wife. The disgusting fumes of the bar-room were still upon his garments when he came in. They were perceived by Mrs. Edgar, whose face instantly became pale, and its expression alarmed.

"Where, where have you been?" she inquired anxiously.

The walk home had given Edgar just enough time for reflection to see and feel that he had done wrong. He was painfully conscious of having acted with great indiscretion, and of having escaped an imminent danger. Not for the world would he tell his wife where he had been. Yet he perceived, the moment he entered her presence, that she more than half suspected the truth. He did not know what heart sickening evidences of the error he had committed he bore about his person in the fumes of tobacco smoke and mixed liquors he had brought away from the place into which he had permitted himself to be lured. If he had been fully aware of this fact, he would not have evaded, even to equivocation and direct falsehood, the anxious inquiry of his wife.

Silent and sad both retired to bed that night, and for hours did both turn and turn, restless and sleepless, upon their pillows. It was the first unhappy time they had known since the blessed pledge had saved the erring one from the dreadful bondage to sin and shame into which he had fallen.

CHAPTER IV.

Though much troubled in mind, on the next day, when he thought of the occurrences of the previous evening, Edgar could not disguise the fact, that the time at Bender's, spent among his old companions, had glided by pleasantly, and contrasted strongly with the dull evenings he had for months passed at home. Reason, and the common perceptions of his mind told him that he had acted wrong; yet, still, his thoughts turned spontaneously to the agreeable hours of the last evening, while a counter-argument in favor of repeating his visits among his friends, to which he inclined an open ear, was going on within him.

It is no matter of surprise that the mind of Edgar became confused, and that he was unable to see, except by partial glimpses, the right way before him. No one in the shop knew that he had spent the last evening at Bender's, and not on any consideration would he have had the fact known among his fellow workmen—not that he had done wrong, was mentally affirmed, but because his motive was misconstrued. Through the whole of the day following this deviation from the path of safety, the mind of Edgar was disturbed, and his thoughts in conflict. There were times, when he saw as clearly as one sees the sun at noonday, that he had been wrong; but darkness and confusion would again fall over his mind, and then the argument for self-indulgence went on.

Evening at last came, and Edgar returned to his family less happy than he had been for months. He was not determined as to what he would do with himself after tea. He could not make up his mind to go again, of his own accord, to Bender's; and the thought of moping at home, or loitering, aimlessly, about the street, was exceedingly irksome.

That a change had taken place in the mind of her husband, was too plain to Mrs. Edgar; and the date of that change was, undoubtingly referred to the previous evening.—Anxiety and fear oppressed her. Edgar did not eat with his usual appetite nor was he so cheerful as he had been. Not once did she see him smile. He scarcely noticed the children; and when she spoke to him, he answered her as if he had but half heard her question. When he arose from the table, his eyes turned almost involuntarily, upon his hat. His wife noticed the movement; at the same instant their glances met, and he became fully aware that she was suffering the keenest anxiety on his account.

The effect of this discovery, coming upon his own unsettled state and half consciousness of error, was to fret him, and still more to obscure his perceptions.

Without a word, he sat down, and lifted one of the younger children in his arms. But he did not exhibit towards it any other mark of affection. In fact, but a few moments elapsed, before he had almost forgotten the fact that his child's head was resting upon his bosom. Too strong was the internal agitations of his mind to leave room for the play of tender and humanizing affections.

"Am I to give up all recreation of mind?" he said to himself. "Am I to be watched and guarded like a heedless boy?

Is *she* afraid to trust me out of her sight? Tied to a woman's apron-string! No, no! That will never do for William Edgar!"

He arose from his chair and put the child down suddenly.

"Do n't go out, William," said his wife, in an earnest voice and with a troubled look.

"Why not?" And he turned quickly upon her, and spoke sharply.

Tears came into her eyes, and her husband saw them. But she did not answer the unkind interrogation. For a moment Edgar looked at his wife sternly; then he put on his hat and left the house.

Was he happier in consequence of his first deviation from the right way, small as it might seem to him? No! He felt wretched. As he walked hastily along, after leaving the house, he thus muttered to himself—

"Am I not pledged to total abstinence? And have I not faithfully kept my pledge for the greater part of a year? Must I now be watched; and have every movement interfered with, as if I were not to be trusted out of sight? No! no! I will not submit to it. As to moping about home any longer, night after night, I cannot think of it. That alone, if continued much longer, would drive me to drink again as a measure of relief."

And Edgar, after having said this, quickened his pace, and was soon at the drinking house where he had spent the previous evening. He lingered but an instant at the door. Within he found a number of persons; but it so happened that not one of them proved to be an old acquaintance. This made him feel a little awkward. After walking across the floor of the room once or twice, he sat down by a table upon which were files of newspapers, and commenced reading. All but him were either drinking at the bar, or had their glasses of liquor before them at the tables, where they were reading or conversing. To make a convenience of such a place, without taking anything at the bar, he could not think of doing. He was about rising to call for a glass of lemonade, when a feeling of shame came into his mind, at the thought of merely taking lemonade, when all around him were drinking either wine or spirits. All, he felt sure, would observe it, and look upon him as a reformed man, who was afraid of anything stronger than cold water.

A severe conflict now commenced and continued for nearly ten

minutes, his better reason growing weaker every moment. He argued, at last, against himself, that he had abstained from drinking so long that the old appetite had died out, and that there would not be the slightest danger in taking a glass occasionally. To this opposed itself the fact that he had signed a solemn pledge never again to taste, touch nor handle any thing that had the power of intoxication. The greatest difficulty was to get around this view of the case. To gain his own consent to violate, deliberately, the vow of abstinence he had taken, and in the strength of which he had been enabled to rise above the influence of the insatiate appetite that had degraded him lower than the beasts, was no easy thing. Yet still the conflict continued, his mind growing each moment more obscured, and the opposition of reason weaker. In this state, and in a moment when a dark shadow appeared to fall over him, he got up and walked to the bar.

"What will you have?" said the bar-keeper, looking up at him.

"A glass of—of—of—of brandy and water."

A tumbler was pushed towards him and a decanter placed upon the bar. Edgar poured out a small quantity, to which he added water, and then taking up the glass, walked back to the table where he had been sitting, intending to drink the brandy at his leisure, while he enjoyed a newspaper. Ere the tempting draught had touched his lips, a hand was laid upon his shoulder. He turned, and met the earnest gaze of an individual whom he did not recollect to have before seen.

"Come!" said this person. "I want to show you something."

The manner of the man was earnest and serious. Edgar, aroused instantly, by the incident into self-conviction of being about to do a most evil, perhaps disastrous thing, followed passively the man, who pointed towards one of the boxes before the entrance of which a curtain was drawn. The brandy and water remained untasted, on the table on which it had just been placed.

"Do you see that," said the man, drawing the curtain from before the little alcove.

Edgar looked in. A man sat within, his head laid down upon the table.

"That man is drunk," remarked the stranger.

"Well?" said Edgar; who began now to feel a little irritated

at what struck him as rather an unjustifiable liberty for a stranger to take with him.

"What you will be, in less than an hour, if you put that glass of brandy to your lips."

"Sir!" The tone, look and manner of Edgar expressed displeasure.

"That," continued the man, "was a reformed drunkard. He took the pledge a year ago, and became sober, industrious and happy. But, like you, tempted at length by his old feelings and appetites, he came to this place, drank and fell. It is not a week since I saw him enter that door, as sober as you are. You see him now. Drink the liquor you have called for, and you will be like him."

A palsying tremor seized the limbs of Edgar; and he had to place his hand upon a chair near which he stood. For a moment or two longer the man held back the curtain, and then let it fall again, hiding the painful scene he had, in raising it, disclosed.

"A wise man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself; but the simple pass on and are punished," said the stranger, close to the ears of Edgar.

How he got out of the place, the reformed man could hardly tell. He awoke like one from a dream, and found himself in the street, with the cool and uncontaminated air melting upon his hot forehead. But he was weak in every limb, and still trembled so, that he could hardly bear his weight. As soon as the whole truth of his position came clearly to his mind, and he saw the deep gulf upon whose brink he had been standing, he shuddered to the very centre of his being.

In half an hour from the time her husband left the house, Mrs. Edgar, whose heart had been like a heavy weight in her bosom, saw him enter, sober as when he went out. She did not know the fearful danger he had encountered, during the brief period of his absence.

CHAPTER V.

Up to that time, Edgar had felt the most perfect confidence in the power of the pledge alone to sustain him. But now he had

a painful and discouraging sense of the fact, that it was not a bond too strong in every case for the reformed man's reviving appetite to break. He had been just on the eve of its violation, and was only saved by what seemed to him scarcely less than a miracle. The man whose timely warning had been so successfully given, was, to him, a perfect stranger. How he should have known him or his history, or why he should have interfered so opportunely, were alike unanswered questions to him. He seemed like a heaven-sent messenger to warn him of the destruction that lay in his path. And so, in a certain sense, he was. He was the same individual who had noticed and remarked to himself on the dangerous position Edgar occupied, on the night he was tempted to rejoin his old companions; and, slave as he was to a depraved appetite, he had yet enough regard for others' good left in his heart to prompt him to interpose to save a fellow-man from ruin, ere interposition would be rendered hopeless.

Of the temptation into which he had fallen, and of the danger he had encountered, Edgar said nothing to his wife. But she saw that he was not only ill at ease from some cause, but suffering in his mind. He retired early to bed.

For days the reformed man was silent, thoughtful and serious. His former confidence in the all-sufficiency of the pledge was gone, and yet he resolved to cling to it, as the only palladium of safety; and he did so, in trembling hope and fear. One result of his recent error, in making him less confident of his secure position, was to lead him to see the necessity of keeping, as far as possible, from every thing that would entice him away from the narrow path of rigid self-denial in which he was now walking securely. That he was wrong in going to the drinking-house and among his old companions, was as clear to him as the day. He saw that old associations must revive old feelings, and these awaken old appetites. He was also aware that the reason of his having ordered the brandy and water was not really so much founded in the wish not to attract attention, as he supposed at the time, as it was in the desire he felt again to taste the inspiring liquor. This was a humiliating and discouraging consciousness. As a pledged man, he had stood with his head erect in a proud sense of security; and yet, he had, in less than a year from the time his pledge was taken, been upon the very eve of its violation, and in danger of falling into hopeless ruin.

Weeks elapsed before Edgar could breathe again freely, and even then he did not experience that comfortable sense of security he had before known. There was felt a want of something beyond the pledge;—a desire to come into a position of security above that guaranteed by an external bond, such as a pledge, or solemnly subscribed promise, totally to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks. He wanted to pass along free from any internal desire to go astray after sensual delights.

"If there were nothing in me to be tempted," he said, thinking to himself, "I might pass through a fiery furnace of allurements to go astray, yet not feel their presence. I want some internal change. But will that ever come? I hoped the pledge would do all that for me; but it has, so far at least, failed to give me internal power. In obedience to my bond, I abstain from the maddening poison, and abstinence gives me a sound mind again, and makes me a new man in all the relations of life. I am a debtor to the pledge beyond all accounts; but still, it does not make an internal change, and until that takes place, I am not in safety."

A consciousness of danger made the condition of Edgar really more secure than it was before. Nothing could now have tempted him to run again into the danger from which he had just escaped.

The passage of a few months, however, caused the anxious feelings with which he had been troubled to subside again, and a sense of security settled once more upon his mind. Meanwhile the want of companionship, or something to do in the evening, caused the hours to drag heavily, and often drove him out to wander on the streets. The hot summer weather came round again, and with it revived, at times, the old thirst for stimulating drinks. Often, now, as he wandered listlessly along the streets, on warm evenings, the sight of decanters of liquor in a window, or the fumes from some bar-room that he passed, excited a sudden desire for a draught of mixed liquors. This imagination, in spite of all his efforts to banish the image from his thoughts, would dwell upon the well-remembered tastes and refreshing qualities of iced beverages, compounded of brandy, sugar and lemons, or other liquors and flavors well known to the palates of all who indulge the stimulating glass. There were times when this would be so strong, that it seemed as if he could not resist it.

The Fourth of July, or Independence Day, came round, and William Edgar, in common with almost every one, had a holiday. In the hope of enjoying it more than he would if he staid at home, he decided on taking a little excursion into the country by one of the railroad lines. He wanted his wife to go along with him; but that she said was out of the question. She could not possibly leave home. So he went by himself.

The place at which the cars stopped, and where Edgar proposed to himself to spend a portion of the day, was one of public entertainment. There was a handsomely fitted up tavern, with its well-stocked bar, and choice variety of refreshments. In front of this was a spacious lawn, with walks; and in the rear a large garden. It was a pleasant place, and one to which a large number of persons resorted. On this occasion, over a hundred persons had come out to spend the holiday.

The day was very warm. When Edgar stepped from the car in which he had come out from the city, he felt thirsty. The first thing that struck his eye, as he passed, with the company that had arrived along with him, into the spacious bar-room, was the words, in bold letters,—"ALL THE TEMPERANCE BEVERAGES;" and below was a list of their various names. There was "Root Beer," "Cream Mead," "Nectar," Soda Water," "Sarsaparilla Beer," "Sherbet," "Lemonade," "Ginger Pop," "Spruce Beer," and some half-dozen other beverages besides. Edgar ran his eye over this list, and selected spruce beer, for which he called. That seemed more like what he wanted than any thing else he felt authorized to take. The beer was particularly palatable. He enjoyed it very much. After drinking it, he strolled out into the garden, and wandered about among the flowers and shrubbery for some time. But he at length grew weary of this, and ceased to perceive the sweet odors that filled the air, or to notice the variety and beauty of the many-colored flowers. Then he returned to the house and sat down in the bar-room to read. He could not, however, get interested in the newspapers he found there, and soon laid them aside. He then passed some time in observing those who came in and went to the bar to drink. There were two bar-tenders, and they were busy nearly all the while. He observed that few called for the temperence beverages; not one in twenty. Involuntarily, while in his thought he condemned the folly of those who indulged in

strong drink, did he watch the glasses as they were placed to the lips of the drinkers; while, in imagination, the peculiar flavor of the draughts lingered pleasantly upon his own sense of taste. This went on, until the old appetite began to revive, and he became aware of the fact.

Then commenced another fierce conflict. He thought, instantly, of his pledge, and of the dreadful consequences that must follow; and, in order to give himself every advantage in the conflict he felt coming on, he arose up and went from the bar-room, with its brandy-perfumed atmosphere, out into the open air, that was redolent of the breath of flowers; and tried to forget all that had just passed before him, and to stifle the desires it had created. But this was no easy task. An affection of the mind, when once excited, carries the thoughts with it, and the thought bodying forth the affection, gives it an active existence and a double power. He could not, therefore, try as he would, get away from the strong inward enticements to a fatal indulgence.

"I will not violate my pledge," said he, arousing his mind into a firmer resolution. "In that is my safety, and I will stand by it. Nothing shall tempt me to violate my pledge! No—no. I am not so lost to all sense of honor and manly self-respect, as to break my solemn pledge."

But, for all this, the evil spirit would not be quieted, but rather raged the more fiercely. Like a restive and impatient horse, the awakened appetite yielded to the rein only while more than common strength was applied, and then struggled on again, bearing its rider along in spite of his most vigorous restraining efforts. Had the cars been on the eve of starting for the city, Edgar would have thrown himself into them and thus escaped from a place where temptation had come suddenly upon him like a downward rushing torrent. But three hours would pass before the next train went down.

"I shall be lost before that," said the fiercely-assailed man with a shudder, as he thought of the long period through which he would have to remain in a place so full of danger. "And am I not a man?" he added. "Have I not the power in myself to do right—to resist evil and choose the good? I have. And, like a man, I will conquer this intense desire!"

Under this impulse, Edgar walked along with a firmer step, and with a feeling of confidence. But, too soon, alas! the wave that

had receded a moment rushed back upon him, and bore him from his feet. For half an hour, perhaps, he continued to resist. Then, human strength failing, he gave up the unequal struggle. Long before he had taken the pledge, and ere he had fallen as low as he was when by means of the pledge he was elevated from a condition of abject bondage, he had tried over and over again to reform. All the considerations possible for a man to array in support of good resolutions, he had called to his aid, but they were swept away. He had thought of his sorrowing and over-burdened wife; of his neglected and abused children; of his own wretched and fallen condition, and contrasted with these the peace, comfort and happiness of former times. But all had availed nothing. So strong was his depraved appetite, that he could not resist its appeals for just a small indulgence; that granted, and all was again lost. The pledge coming in with its all embracing restrictions, not only made him at once a sober man, but bound him to others in an honorable contract. Its effect was to give him a conscious elevation. To make him feel that, as a man, he was looked to in society; and that his life must be in conformity to his avowed principles. This held him up, until he began to gain some internal strength, and to be able to walk by the aid of good purposes as intrinsic powers, and without thinking of his pledge. But, that he was not in himself really strong enough to stand firm without the aid of external bonds, has been seen. And as these bonds were but human restraints, they were really inadequate to save him fully from the unregenerated appetite that lurked like an enemy within, ready to waste and destroy when the good man of the house should be asleep.

On this occasion, while the fierce conflict was going on, he revived all the old considerations that he had used as means to give him strength; but the picture of his family, smitten down again by his act, would fade so quickly from his mind, that it exercised but a feeble influence. Then he fell back upon his pledge again, and thought of all the consequences that would result from its violation,—honor lost,—the cause of temperance injured, himself a by-word and a disgrace in the community. Had he not boasted, over and over again, of his freedom? Had he not said that the pledge alone would save the most debased drunkard, and by its own power hold him above all temptations? Yet all was of no avail. It was an hour of darkness. A thousand enemies to

his peace were rushing upon him, and poor feeble human nature could not withstand the assault.

But, the reformed man who struggles with an earnest desire to hold fast by his integrity, even where, as in the case of Edgar, trusting too much in his own strength, he exposes himself to temptation, is not left without aid from above—from whence alone comes all true power to resist evil—if he will but use it.

Edgar had given up the struggle, and the conqueror Appetite was leading him back into the bar-room, a victim for sacrifice. He had come near to the door of the tavern, when, lifting up his eyes from the ground, they met a well known face. It was that of an aged minister in poor health, who lived opposite to the shop where he worked, and whom he saw every day walking out with slow and feeble steps, leaning on the arm of his daughter. Cars had just arrived from the city, and the weak old man had come out in them to breathe the refreshing country air, accompanied, as usual, by his loving child, a young girl who had known some eighteen summers. To the minister, Edgar was a perfect stranger, and he might well be surprised when the latter paused suddenly before him, and with a look and tone of desperate entreaty said—

"Oh sir! Save me from myself, or I am lost forever!"

And as he thus spoke, he laid his hand upon the minister's arm, and clung to it with an eager, trembling grasp. For a moment the old man was startled, and his daughter became pale with fear. The first impression of both was, that the man was deranged. Edgar saw that such was the case, and instantly released his hold and receded a single pace, saying as he did so—

"I am a reformed man, mad with the old desire for drink. Can you not save me? Oh, sir! Put forth your hand and hold me back, for my own power of resistance is gone!"

"In man there is no strength," replied the minister; "but all power is in God. Look to Him, and he will save you. Trust in Him, and He will be mightier than all your enemies. But come, and let us go where we can be alone. In the mean time, fear not! The struggling spirit, God never leaves in the hands of its enemies. He sends aid, even if it be at the last moment. Come!"

And they moved away, and were soon alone in a shady retreat in the garden removed from observation, or any thing to interrupt their intercourse.

CHAPTER VI.

As soon as they were alone, the minister asked, in a composed voice, for he had, as they walked along in silence, collected his thoughts—

"Have you signed the pledge?"

"Oh yes; long ago."

"Have you ever broken it?"

"No. But, it seems as if I were possessed to do it now."

"But is not the fact that you have solemnly promised to abstain, totally, from all intoxicating drinks, sufficient to make you resist this temptation?"

"It is sufficient in others; and it ought to be, but it is not now in me. You do not know how reason and everything else is carried away by the returning power of the old appetite I had thought subdued. The pledge has done much for me. It has lifted me from the lowest deep of degradation, and made me a sober man and careful for my family. But it seems to be losing its power."

"Let us rather hope," said the minister, in a voice of encouragement, "that it has done its highest work for you, and that the temptations you are now enduring are but the salutary precursors of an elevated and more truly rational state of mind into which you are about entering; a state in which obedience to what is right will come from an internal regard for right principles, and not from any external considerations whatever. The man who comes into this state is free indeed."

"But how shall I come into it, sir?" asked the unhappy man.

"By shunning the evil of drinking, because intoxication is a sin against the Lord."

Edgar looked earnestly into the minister's face. The latter resumed.

"There is no power in any one to refrain from evil, except it be given him from Heaven. All the power that the pledge contains, is a Heaven-sent power; and men are able to keep it from a certain principle of integrity and honor, which comes to them from above. But, it is the desire and effort of the Lord to elevate every one from a state of mere external obedience to orderly and

just principles, into an internal obedience that springs from a love of things good and true. The pledge is for those in whom a life of self-indulgence and low sensual pleasures has debased the mind. But, its mission ceases so soon as it has raised those to whom it has come, in great mercy, from their low and degraded state, into a higher and truer life. To those who will not rise above its mere external requirements, it remains a law: but they are ever in danger. Hundreds, nay, thousands have broken and will continue to break it. Only those who forget the pledge in their regard for religious principles, are really safe."

Edgar continued to listen eagerly, and while he listened and earnestly desired to come into the higher state described by the minister, he felt no longer the presence of the tempter.

"We are all God's creatures," continued the minister, "and his love for us is so great that he would not only save every one into heaven, but draw us ever closer and into himself. His providence, which is over every one of us, regards eternal ends. He is ever seeking to remove our inmost affections from material objects, that they may be placed on things spiritual. These are the things that are really and truly substantial, for they abide forever. Now, the Lord, in flowing down with his power into the pledge, looks not simply to the saving of the poor drunkard from the misery and wretchedness into which he had plunged his body by debasing his mind; but He looks, really, to the man's spiritual elevation. The first step is, of course, the abandonment of intoxicating drinks, and the means of doing this He furnishes to the most depraved, in the power residing in the pledge. The pledge, for a time, is left to do its work. But it has only external requirements, and is only an external bond. To those who are capable of spiritual elevation, temptations come, after a time; and thus they are driven to seek for strength in their weakness by looking directly to the Lord, and from Him receiving power to live a truly temperate, just and useful life. Be not then discouraged, my friend.—Look to the Lord, and He will sustain you. Lean upon Him—trust in His strength, and you are beyond the reach of danger."

"I feel," replied Edgar, in a low, subdued voice, "that there is no power in a human arm to save me. My good resolutions have become like a thread. The strength of an infant could break them. If help comes not from above, I am lost."

"Help will come from above. It is in order that you may look for and claim this help, that you are now so sorely tempted. Fear not. The refiner and purifier of silver will not let the precious ore be lost while the fire consumes the dross. You will be, I trust, better, wiser, and happier for the painful ordeal through which you are now passing."

And the minister was right. When Edgar returned home, after having received much good counsel from the venerable man, it was in a sober, yet calm frame of mind.

Not unaware, altogether, of the dangers that lay about her husband's feet, Mrs. Edgar had spent the whole day in a state of more than ordinary anxiety. As the hour of his return drew near, she felt so troubled that she could with difficulty compose herself to her work, from which she had taken no relaxation. When she at last heard his step in the room below, her hand fell powerless by her side, and she sat breathless and motionless until he ascended the steps and came in. One look sufficed; all was well; and while a smile of welcome illuminated her face, her husband saw that tears were in her eyes, and read, beneath the veil of joy that was hung over her countenance, the marks of anxiety and painful suspense.

The history of what he had suffered on that day, Edgar did not relate to his wife; for he felt that to do so would only create doubts and fears in her mind. But he talked to her of much that the minister's words had suggested, and ere they retired for the night, he took from the closet an old family Bible, and read a chapter or two aloud. This was repeated in the morning, with the children around him, and then he went, once more, to his work. His mind was in a calm and peaceful frame throughout the day, and there was thankfulness in his heart to the Great Father of mercies for the timely aid that had been sent to him, when, struggling in his own strength for victory over the powers of evil, he had well nigh been overcome. In all this there was a humble acknowledgment and trust in the Divine Goodness.

The hours did not pass as heavily as usual on that evening. When the supper was over, Edgar took his two oldest children, and after hearing them read and say their lessons, became interested in some little school events which they related, and which afforded him an opportunity to give them some good advice. After they had gone to bed, many things came up in his mind as

subjects of conversation, and he talked with his wife for an hour or two, unvisited by a sense of weariness. Before retiring for the night, a chapter in the Bible was read; and in the morning this was again repeated. Never before had there seemed so much life, power, and beauty in the Holy Word as now. Passages read in the morning, returned again and again to his thoughts through the day, and kept his mind in an elevated frame.

Gradually the mind of Edgar rose into a more distinct and formal acknowledgment of the Divine Being as an object of worship. To the reading of the Bible in his family was added a bending of the knee in prayer, and the repetition of that beautiful and all-embracing formulary given by the Lord when he visited us in the flesh. And when he said, "Our Father," he felt that God was indeed his father, and that if he trusted in Him he would pass through the world unharmed by the powers of evil.

No longer came idle and irksome hours to the reformed man. He always found something useful to do either for his family or others, during the evenings in which he was freed from the regular business of the day. He could read now and take an interest in what he read; for his mind was progressing upwards, and with this progress came a thirst for knowledge. Daily and hourly was he gaining more and more true internal strength; and this he gained through an acknowledgment of God in every thing and reference to him in all he did.

A few years have gone by since William Edgar passed through the severe temptations we have described; and as he has, since that time, acted in all things from a religious principle, and gradually risen into higher and higher spiritual life and intelligence, he has experienced no more of those strong enticements to self-indulgence which before almost bore him away, like a strong rushing torrent. But he knows that if he were to let one draught of intoxicating liquor pass his lips, that moment he would fall—that moment the subdued appetite would spring into life and bear him down with an irresistible power—and, therefore, he *shuns the evil of drinking as a sin against God.*

THE END.

A.H. 3-80

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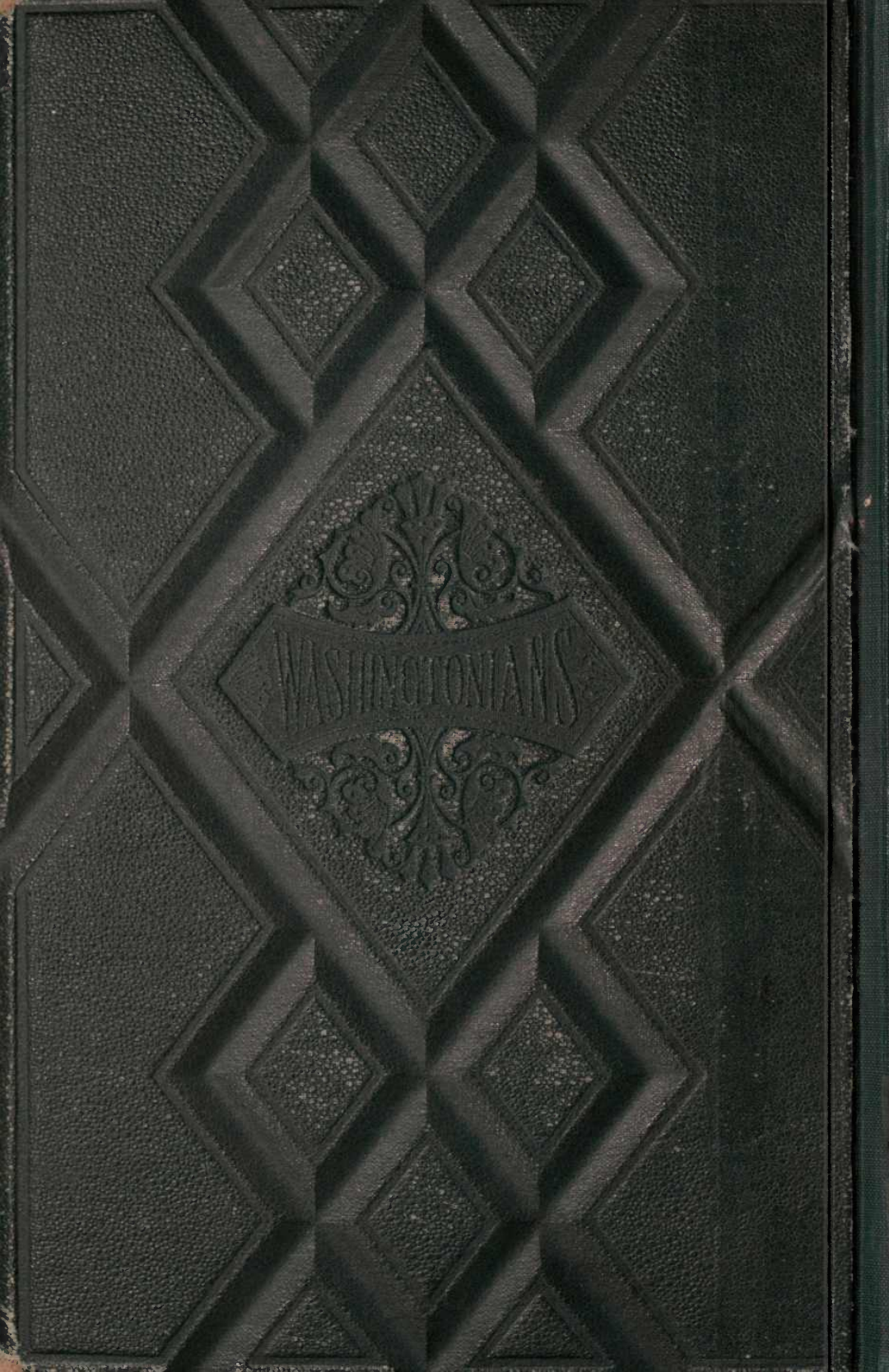
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